

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

PREVIEW
BATTLE
ARENA
TOSHINDEN 3



INDEPENDENCE DAY

TAKE TO THE SKIES AND WHUP E.T.'S
BUTT IN FOX'S VIDEO GAME VERSION
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OVER

100

GAMES INSIDE:

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FIGHTERS MEGAMIX • DOOM 64
MACE: DARK AGE • BUMBERMAN
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TEKKEN 3

NUMBER 92

MARCH, 1997
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TEKKEN 2



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ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

By Ed Semrad

So you got a brand-new PlayStation for Christmas? I bet it probably either took a fair amount of time to save up the \$200 or it took a lot of convincing to get your parents to spring for "another" game system. And now that you have it, you're probably telling everybody that it is a lot better than the old 16-bit system that you finally retired. So other than buying a few new games and an occasional peripheral I bet you think everything is set for the next two years—right?

Well, you might want to take this sitting down. The rumors are starting to circulate throughout the industry that there might be a "new" version of the PlayStation coming out. Perhaps as soon as the second quarter of next year in Japan.

While rumors like this are common in our industry, technology has been advancing so fast that these or four years is about the lifespan of a product. Considering that the PlayStation came out in 1994 in Japan (about one year earlier than in the U.S.), the system is starting to show its age.

In that time period not only has memory price dropped considerably, but so has the speed of faster CD-ROM drives. These are two areas where the PlayStation is lacking. Imagine having a "new" system with a 6X or 8X drive (faster than Nintendo's yet unreleased magnetic drive) and another two to four megabytes of internal memory. Developers tell us that the PlayStation's existing memory is already hindering some of the new projects that they want to do and just a few more megs would really open up the system. Imagine being able to morph in *Mortal Kombat* at the speed of a cartridge (almost) and not having to wait for the machine to access the new data or, in a worst case scenario—access the data three to four times faster than now.

Best of all, and it is only speculation at this point, Sony just might be able to make the new system backwards compatible with the one we presently own. That's the good news but it's not much help when there is a "step-up" system selling for \$299 and many of the new games will only be able to be played on the new system.

Would Sony really try bringing out a new system and possibly jeopardize the comfortable lead that they now enjoy over Sega and Nintendo? They probably would do it in Japan as the system race over there is a lot closer than it is here. And Japan always does what they want to anyway. Unfortunately that would be the signal that in the next year (1996) the new system would be coming out here in the U.S.

If that would happen, imagine what the PlayStation sales would be during



Jaleco of Japan has redefined the meaning of indoor soccer!

the holidays of that year. It could be bleak but to offset it the price of the existing system could be set a lot lower than now, perhaps near the \$100 price point (especially now that Sony has done some major consolidation of most of the console and chips on the current Japanese PlayStation).

It isn't just the PlayStation that could be upgraded in the near future. Sega has let the unofficial word out that their Virtua Fighter 3 (or possibly any of the Model 3 board games) will not work on the Saturn without an add-on heavy duty memory cartridge. This, plus the fact that Sony just could bring out a better system BEFORE Sega, could possibly get Sega to make the jump to a new system first.

Of course this is all speculation. Neither Sony nor Sega (in Japan) has officially announced anything nor have they hinted that the new system rumors are even partially true.

The clock is ticking though, and as the 32-bit systems approach their third birthday (in Japan) later this year, everybody has to prepare for the inevitable day (the 1998 Spring PlayStation Show in Japan?) that Sony shows prototypes of the PlayStation 2.

Look at the bright side. If you set \$10 aside every month starting now you ought to have the money ready when the new system hits the stores.

And you thought that the new PlayStation that you got for Christmas would be around forever? Sorry Alice this ain't Wonderland!

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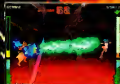
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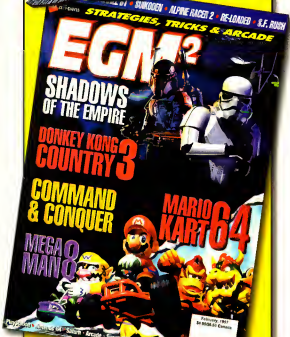
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WIN BACK YOUR INDEPENDENCE DAY FROM THE MENACING ALIENS! THE STORY STARTS ON PAGE 92!

COVER ART BY CRAIG RAE

104

GAME
directory

- 107 All-Star Baseball
- 34 Bomberman
- 58 Babble Bobble
- 102 Carnage Heart
- 101 City of the Lost Children
- 50 Codename: Tenka
- 58,60 Crisis'n USA
- 52 Crusader No Remorse
- 100 Crypt Killer
- 94-95 Doom 64
- 99 Fighters Megamix
- 58 Fighting Vipers
- 104-05 Grand Slam Baseball
- 61 Grid Runner
- 52 Hexon
- 61 Ironman/X-D Manower
- 42 Meze: Dark Age
- 44 Mario Kart 64
- 42 Maximum Force
- 38 Mega Man Battle & Chase
- 48 Nanotek Warrior
- 61 NHL FaceOff '97
- 52,58 Norse by Norsewest
- 58 Perfect Weapon
- 108 Rage Racer
- 48 Revelations Persona
- 50 Soul Blade
- 50 Spider
- 58,61 Star Gladiator
- 106 Thunder Truck Rally
- 48 Tiger Shark
- 38 Time Crisis
- 32 Tobal 2
- 35 Toshiinden 3
- 44,96-97 Turok: Dinosaur Hunter
- 103 Vandal Hearts
- 107 WCW vs. the World
- 42 Wild Arms
- 56 WWF: IYH
- 38 Xevious 3D

NUMBER
92

DEPARTMENTS

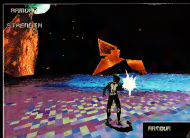
- 6 **INSERT COIN**
Our editor talks about Sony's new PlayStation 2.
- 18 **PRESS START**
The news that's making headlines in the world of video games.
- 26 **TOP 10**
See which video game won the number-one spot.
- 28 **GAMING GOSSIP**
THE inside source on the gaming industry from Q-Mann.
- 32 **PROTOS**
Exclusive first-looks at games on the horizon.
- 44 **REVIEW CREW**
A no-holds-barred critique of gaming's latest releases.
- 56 **TRICKS OF THE TRADE**
Want a power trip? Check out the hottest cheats here.
- 64 **SPECIAL FEATURES**
The best of '96, plus SF3 and Tekken 3 updates.
- 94 **NEXT WAVE**
Get a sneak peek at upcoming titles for all systems!
- 104 **TEAM EGM**
Previews and reviews for sports gamers.
- 110 **INTERFACE**
An open forum for readers' questions and concerns.

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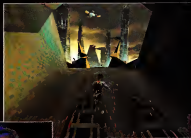
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THIS MONTH



64

THE WHO'S WHO OF STREET FIGHTER III

We've been feeding the starved Street Fighter fans morsels of gaming info about the third installment. In this issue, get ready to take a huge bite of knowledge regarding the cast members and their moves! The story begins on page 64!

"Remember the old man in Chun-Li's original stage background? Well, he's back and he may do more than just watch..."

THE COMPETITION RAGES ON WITH TEKKEN 3!

It seems like three is the magic number! Tekken 3 goes above and beyond what Tekken 1 and 2 had to offer. With its enhanced graphics and new moves and techniques, this installment might just blow away the competition! The story begins on page 80!

"Tekken 3 already looks like it'll be to Tekken 2 what that sequel was to the first Tekken."



80



82

FIND OUT WHICH GAMES WERE NUMBER ONE IN '96!

Mario, Crash, Sonic...PlayStation, Saturn, Nintendo 64...what was the best of the best in 1996? In this issue, see which games and systems were awarded the number-one slot. Also, find out which game you—the reader—picked as the best for 1996! The story begins on page 82!

"Super Mario is by far the single best video game of 1996."

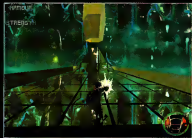
96



TUROK: DINOSAUR HUNTER

NEXT WAVE

- 94 DOOM 64
- 96 TUROK: DINOSAUR HUNTER
- 98 NORSE BY NORSEWEST
- 99 FIGHTERS MEGAMIX
- 100 CRYPT KILLER
- 101 CITY OF LOST CHILDREN
- 102 CARNAGE HEART
- 103 VANDAL HEARTS



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THE BEST VIDEO GAME NEWS

PRESS START

Game Developer Alleges Sony Sought Hostile Takeover in '93

A 2-year-old lawsuit against Sony Corp. has received newfound attention after representatives for the plaintiff, a sports video game developer, publicized details about the suit.

The suit, which seeks more than \$390 million in damages, claims that Sony representatives hired away employees from Park Place Productions, a California-based firm which designed and developed the first John Madden football game and other 16-Bit titles.

The suit also claims those employees hired away from Park Place allegedly took "hardware, software and proprietary source codes" from Park Place in December of 1993, representatives for the plaintiff stated.

When contacted, a Sony Computer Entertainment of America official declined to comment on the ongoing suit.

Attorneys for Park Place claim that Sony had sought to buy

the developer and hire its employees to form an in-house development team to make sports titles for the PlayStation, such as NFL GameDay.

"Once Sony set its mind on taking our company's sports development teams, there was very little we could do to prevent it," stated Park Place reps, who claim that Sony had allegedly "pillaged and plundered Park Place, taking our company's most valuable assets...cutting out the heart of our company."

As of press time, the suit remains in pretrial litigation, according to Park Place attorney Gerald E. Sarta.

While the lawsuit alleges "questionable" tactics on Sony's part, it must be noted that game publishers routinely hire workers away from one another—that's just the nature of an industry in which firms aggressively seek top talent. There's nothing necessarily illegal about that practice.

Due to the unique nature of the charges claimed in the suit, EGM will continue to monitor it until the dispute is resolved. ■

Sony Merges Control of PS

Worldwide control of the PlayStation's global strategy is returning to its roots—Japan.

Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. (SCEI) has said that it will incorporate the ownership of the North American and European PS operations back into SCE in Tokyo.

"The consolidation of leadership will let SCE better concentrate on expanding the PlayStation's leadership in North America and the world," said Kaz Hirai, chief operating officer for SCE of America.

TECHNOLOGY

SS TURNS VID PHONE

To paraphrase a familiar telephone slogan, Sega is letting its 32-Bit console reach out and touch someone—at least in Japan.

That country's main phone company, Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp., and Sega Enterprises have teamed up to sell a videophone system that works with the Saturn, according to overseas reports.

The product, dubbed the SS Phoenix, will allow Saturn owners to talk to as well as see each other via a special camera (see sidebar) that plugs into the Saturn.

The SS Phoenix will sell for under \$400 U.S. and should hit the market this spring, overseas sources stated.

At this point, it appears unlikely that Sega of America will make a U.S. version of this videophone peripheral. ■



The Setup

This picture, supplied by Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp. and Sega Enterprises, shows an artist's rendition of the video phone interface. The interface unit—that houses the circuitry, microphone and camera—plugs into the Saturn's cart port. Users can hear and see the folks they "dial up" via a TV screen or monitor. Connections can be made via standard phone lines or ISDN.

NUMBERS

The Good

● **Sony Asserts** itself as top gun with 3 million PS systems out in North America.

The Bad

● **Sega's** Despite better Saturn sales, company faced sharp profit decline in '96.

The Ugly

● **Nintendo's** N64 sales are hot, says tired Santa, is he to blame for all the N64 delays?

BIG THREE BASK IN HOLIDAY'S GLORY

After a fruitful holiday season, console makers have rejoiced within a flurry of positive sales figures.

Both Sony and Nintendo have thrown figures at one another, each touting that their respective systems are tops.

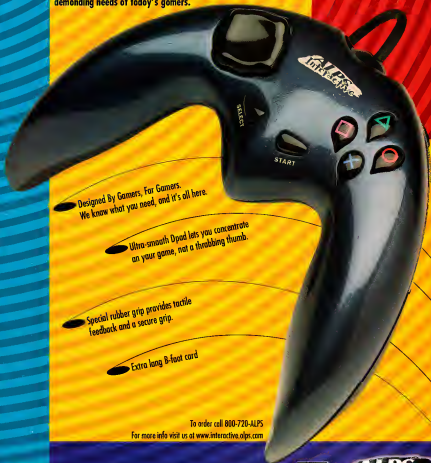
Nintendo states 1.6 million N64s were sold in North America in 1996, making it the fastest-selling system ever.

Meanwhile, Sony contended that bigger is better, claiming a 3 million installed base for the PS in North America.

Due to expected losses in the 16-Bit market and Sega of America's sales, the parent Sega Enterprises has forecast a 66 percent profit slash for 1996. Still, Sega extended a free software Saturn offer due to that promotion's success. ■

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**THE SPIDER THAT'S ALSO AN
EXTERMINATOR**



BANDAI PUTS THE PLAY IN PLAYSTATION



Here's an example of a model using parts from all four different robots in the game...

Robot Fighter Uses Mix-n-Match Models To Build Characters

Every once in a while, a video game comes into the office that's so offbeat and quirky, it elicits "oohs," "aahs" and the occasional "huh?" from the EGM editors.

That's exactly what happened when Bandai's ZXE-D Legend of Plasmatite, a fighting game for the Sony PlayStation. What separates this title from the crowd are four model kits that



...and here, that model is shown on screen, once it's plugged into the PlayStation.

come with the game. These snap-together models plug into the PS via a special memory card and have interchangeable arms and legs (see sidebar).

Instead of a fighting game with predestined characters, the player can custom-create his/her own fighting machine by mixing and matching the model robots' pieces. Since the models plug into the special memory card, the PS can "read" the changes and create an on-screen version of the robot designed.

Since the models are only used to "build" the various fighting robots (they don't move or shake during a fight), their functionality is rather shallow. Still, the concept of linking PS games to toy models seems intriguing enough to consider its potential. For instance, imagine a fighting game that lets you choose the characters you want—by selling them separately as action figures with customized memory cards.

Unfortunately, gamers probably won't see ZXE-D in the United States. First off, the package sports a hefty price tag—almost \$180 U.S. for the game plus models. More importantly, the fighting game is rather poor. ■



In ZXE-D, players earn skill points after each victory. These points can be used to power up the fighter's body parts. Devoting a specific number of points to an arm or leg, for instance, can give the player a new special attack. These moves vary depending on what parts the robot uses.



How Does It Work?



1 The Package: The PlayStation game comes in a huge box (larger than the one the PS hardware comes in). Included inside: four snap-together plastic model kits, the CD game, instructions and a special memory card (more below).

2 Put the Models Together: Think of this package as two toys in one! The first step is to assemble the models, which stand 10 inches tall when finished. The robots' arms and legs are fully interchangeable.

3 Assemble the Models: Each model's body (left) contains an electronic chip that "reads" what arms and legs are plugged into it. The plugs (also pictured left) are color-coded for each mech, resulting in plenty of different robot configurations.

4 Hook Up the Models to the PlayStation:

See the plug in the back of the robot's body (above)? That links the robot to a special PS memory card (right). When the game starts up, it will read the robot's configuration, and "rebuilds" it into an on-screen fighter. At that point, the player can customize the robot's logo, color, skills and pilot—then save the changes on the card.

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WHEEL OF PS FORTUNE



ASCII's Mach 1 might be the closest PS add-on yet to satisfy both flight freaks and driving demons.

In January, EGM revealed news of a PlayStation steering wheel that debuted at the PS Expo in Japan last year. Editors have learned this wheel will be coming to North America under a new name: the Mach 1. The company bringing out the peripheral, ASCII, hopes to have the wheel in stores by the time you read this.

The Mach 1 adapts to virtually any game and player's preference. Not only does the wheel sport four different button configuration settings, it also boasts full digital and analog compatibility with all PS games. It offers four settings: analog, standard digital, pulse output (which simulates analog control with digital games) and "analog joystick."

That last setting sounds very promising. In this mode, the steering column actually moves forward, backward, up and down for additional flight game control. (For racing games that don't need this extra dimension of control, the steering column can be locked in position.) On the wheel itself is a special 380-degree digital D-pad and a set of turbo fire buttons.

According to ASCII, the Mach 1 fits between a player's legs, or it can be secured to a desk or table with a metal clamp. The steering wheel angle can be adjusted to fit players' tastes.

Acceleration and brake pedals round out the steering wheel package. No retail price has formally been announced for the U.S. model, but its counterpart in Japan sells for about \$60 U.S. Look for a detailed review in a future issue. ■

PREVIEW

BIG MAX ATTACK



Also from Nyko is the Maximizer Joystick for the Saturn and PlayStation (PS model shown). Its most unique feature is a fire button pad that rotates 270 degrees; the player can twist the pad to find a comfortable fit. All eight buttons feature independent auto and turbo fire. In addition, there's a slow-motion switch.

Either model retails for \$49.99 U.S. Look for a hands-on review in a future issue. ■



Nyko's Cobra light gun really stands up to heavy-duty abuse. For extra flash, the gun has red LEDs that light up when in use.

LOCK AND LOAD

High-Speed Trigger Makes Gun A Hot Shot

Virtually every gamer who's used a light gun knows it as the kiss of death: to die at the hands of on-screen baddies because he or she forgot to reload the gun.

For once, wouldn't it be nice to play a game without shooting off the screen every five seconds to reload, and just "go postal" on enemies with a light gun that operates more like an Uz4 than a pea shooter?

Well, that's exactly the kind of weapon Nyko has devised: the Cobra Gun, which works for both Sega Saturn and Sony PlayStation. To test it, EGM pitted it against one of the top shoot-'em-ups around: Sega's Virtua Cop 2 for the Saturn.

Suffice to say, the gun's massive firepower allowed one editor to beat the game in its entirety in just two tries—a feat that wouldn't have been done with any other gun currently out.

How was that possible? Well, the Cobra boasts two impressive features. First, it offers programmable auto reload that can be set from one to 15 shots (depending on the game). Second, it has three rapid-fire speeds. Either of these features can be turned off or on to suit a player's preference.

However, with both features on, the Cobra is a killing machine. With VC2, the gun's user mowed down enemies (and the occasional innocent civilian) with amazing ease. Only twice did the gun's high-speed firing seem to stall, requiring an off-screen shot to free it up.

The gun seems slightly heavy, which is probably the Cobra's only shortcoming. Otherwise, it's a solid all-around performer. ■

Cobra

\$39.99 (msrp)

Available now

PROS:
+ auto reload means you never need to shoot off screen
+ sturdy design can take big abuse
+ can use with both PS and SS

MINUS:
- a bit heavy



The dual-analog plug works with either the Saturn or PS.

Sega Channel is alive and kicking in 1997, thanks to an upgrade of its video-game-on-demand cable service. First off, the channel will now update games biweekly rather than monthly—effectively boosting the number of games available per month from 50 to 70. Plus, the channel has crafted a deal with Disney Interactive to offer titles such as Aladdin, Gargoyles and Maui Mallard in Cold Shadow (which isn't even available in stores) on the cable service. For online info on the Web, visit www.sega.com/central/channel.

Sega of America has remained quiet as to future Net Link Saturn titles (played via modem) other than a new version of Sega Rally Championship. Still, in Japan Sega has brought out a Net Link version of the fighting game Virtual On, which seems a virtual lock for a U.S. translation. Another unconfirmed Net Link title is Quake from GT Interactive. Hopefully, further details will come to light next month.

While we're on the subject of Net Link, Sega is offering a new premium online TV channel for Net Link owners. Called On-TV, the service has updated news, sports, weather, TV and entertainment info, just to name a few topics.

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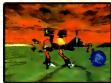
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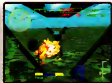
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ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY'S REVIEW CREW

TOP 10 PICK OF THE MONTH

FEBRUARY 1997

OVERALL

PLAYSTATION

1	NEW	Mario Kart⁶⁴	9.3	Nintendo
3	NEW	Dragon Force	8.3	Williams Design
2	NEW	SF Alpha 2	9.1	Capcom
4	NEW	Tomb Raider	9.1	Core
5	NEW	Soul Blade	8.3	Namco
6	NEW	Tetris Attack	8.3	Nintendo
7	NEW	Tekken 2	8.5	Namco
8	NEW	Super Mario⁶⁴	9.5	Nintendo
9	NEW	Command & Conquer	8.9	Westwood Studios
10	NEW	Suikoden	8.7	Konami
11	NEW	Twisted Metal 2	8.3	SCE
12	NEW	Shadows O.T.E.	8.3	Nintendo
13	NEW	Revelations: Persona	8.0	Atari
14	NEW	Wave Race⁶⁴	9.0	Nintendo
15	NEW	Spider	7.4	BMG Interactive
16	NEW	John Madden '97	9.1	Electronic Arts
17	NEW	Norse By Norsewest	7.4	Interplay
18	NEW	Turok: D.Hunter	6.9	Acclaim
19	NEW	Virtua Cop 2	8.1	Sega
20	NEW	Legacy of Kain	8.6	Acclaim

1	NEW	Tomb Raider	9.1	Core
2	NEW	Soul Blade	8.3	Namco
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7	NEW	Spider	7.4	BMG Interactive
8	NEW	John Madden '97	9.1	Electronic Arts
9	NEW	Legacy of Kain	8.6	Acclaim
10	NEW	NanoTek Warrior	7.9	Wired Interactions

SATURN

1	NEW	Dragon Force	9.0	Williams Design
2	NEW	SF Alpha 2	9.1	Capcom
3	NEW	Command & Conquer	8.9	Westwood Studios
4	NEW	Norse by Norsewest	7.4	Interplay
5	NEW	Virtua Cop 2	8.1	Sega
6	NEW	Dark Savior	8.4	Sega
7	NEW	Puzzle Fighter 2	7.4	Chubb
8	NEW	DecAthlete	8.3	Sega
9	NEW	Iron Storm	8.0	Williams Design
10	NEW	Virtual On	7.9	Sega

HOW TO READ THE TOP 10 CHART

2 30 **Name of Game** 9.1

Publisher's Name

Average Review Crew Score

of Consecutive Months On The Chart

Last Month's Rank

Rank Number

Game System

For the first time anywhere, the editors of EGM have put together a listing of the best games for the most popular systems. Our Review Crew has done the ratings, and they have been averaged into one easy-to-read score. It is also important to note that sometimes a game will get ranked higher than others with larger Review Crew scores. This is because the game is "hot," and it is one which our Review Crew is constantly playing. These lists will change every month as additional games are reviewed.

The games are ranked by individual system, and there is an overall top 20 list for all the systems. This last list will pick up any hot 16-bit or portable game that may come out.

On the right-hand page, we have put together a list of all of the games that will be coming out in the next three months for the three major game systems. This list should be helpful for players, so that they can plan out their future game purchases. The game name and the month the title will be released was obtained from each of the game companies and is correct as of the middle of the month.

Please note that the release date could change due to reasons beyond our control.

NINTENDO⁶⁴

1	NEW	Mario Kart⁶⁴	9.3	Nintendo
2	NEW	Super Mario⁶⁴	9.5	Nintendo
3	NEW	Shadows O.T. Empire	7.9	Nintendo
4	NEW	Wave Race⁶⁴	9.3	Sega
5	NEW	Turok: D.Hunter	6.9	Acclaim
6	NEW	MK Trilogy	8.1	Midway
7	NEW	Gretzky Hockey	8.3	Midway
8	NEW	Killer Instinct Gold	6.9	Nintendo

COMING SOON

PLAYSTATION

Battle Stations	EA	Mar.	Action
Battleport	Acclaim	Mar.	Act/Sports
Broken Heels	Konami	Mar.	Act/Adv
Buster Bros	Capcom	Mar.	Puzzle
Codename: Tenka	Playground	Mar.	First-Person
Crypt Killer	Konami	Mar.	Shooter
Darklight Conflict	EA	Mar.	Action
Grand Slam	Virgin	Mar.	Sports
IDA	Fox Interactive	Mar.	Action
Lands of Lore	Westwood Studios	Mar.	RPG
Lethal Enforcers 1 & 2	Konami	Mar.	Shooter
MachWarrior 2	Acclaim	Mar.	Simulation
NanoTek Warrior	Virgin	Mar.	Shooter
NHL Shootout '97	SCEA	Mar.	Sports
NCAA BB Final Four '97	Mindscape	Mar.	Sports
Noad for Speed 2	EA	Mar.	Sports
Punk Performance	Atlas	Mar.	Sports
Project X 2	Acclaim	Mar.	Shooter
Real Bout Fatal Fury	SCEA	Mar.	Fighting
Sentient	Playground	Mar.	RPG
Shadow	Readysoft	Mar.	Act/Adv
Swagman	Edios	Mar.	Adventure
Thunder Truck Rally	Playground	Mar.	Sports
Tiger Shark	GT Interactive	Mar.	Action
Vandal Hearts	Konami	Mar.	RPG
VMX Racing	Playmates	Mar.	Sports
VR Baseball	Interplay	Mar.	Sports
WCW vs. the World	THQ	Mar.	Sports
Wing Commander 4	Origin	Mar.	FMV/Shooter
Xovous 3D	Namco	Mar.	Fighting
All-Star Baseball '97	Acclaim	April	Sports
Armed	Interplay	April	Action
Balloon Fight	Acclaim	April	Sim
Boltan	GT Interactive	April	Action
Brahma Force	Jaleco	April	First-Person
Caesar's World of Gambling	Interplay	April	Sim
Clay Fighter Extreme	Interplay	April	Fighting
Cyberbots	Capcom	April	Fighting
Descent Max	Interplay	April	Action
Demoworld 2	Playground	April	Adventure
Gamma 2000	THQ	April	Action
Heaven's Gate	Atlas	April	Fighting
Marvel Super Heroes	Capcom	April	Fighting
MDK	Playmates	April	Action
Mega Man Battle & Chase	Capcom	April	Action
Nightmare Creatures	Kalisto Entertainment	April	Adventure
Over Blood	EA	April	Adventure
QAD	Philpa	April	Action
Rebel Moon Rising	GT Interactive	April	Action
Soul Blade	Namco	April	Sports
Syndicate Wars	EA	April	Action
Tale of the Sun	SCEA	April	Adventure
Wild Arms	SCEA	April	RPG
D & D Collection	Capcom	May	Fighting
H.O.S.T.	MGM Interactive	May	Shooter
Midnight Run	Konami	May	Sports
Rage Racer	Namco	May	Shooter
Road Asphalt	Interplay	May	Act/Race
X3	Sales Curve	May	Action

NINTENDO 64

Doom 64	Midway	Mar.	1st Person
GoldenEye	Nintendo	Mar.	Action
Missile Impossible	Ocean	Mar.	Act/Adv
Turk Dancer Hunter	Acclaim	Mar.	First-Person
Dark Rift	Vic Tokai	April	Fighting
MLB featuring Ken Griffey Jr.	Nintendo	April	Sports
Blast Corps	Nintendo	May	Action
Clay Fighter Extreme	Interplay	May	Fighting
Crazy Cars	Titus	May	Sports
Kirby's Air Ride	Nintendo	May	Sports
Lamborghini 64	Titus	May	Sports
StarFox 64	Nintendo	May	Shooter

SATURN

Albert Odyssey	Working Designs	Mar.	RPG
Battle Stations	EA	Mar.	Action
Battleport	Acclaim	Mar.	Act/Sports
Darklight Conflict	EA	Mar.	Action
Destruction Derby	THQ	Mar.	Act/Sports
Grand Slam	Virgin	Mar.	Sports
IDA	Fox Interactive	Mar.	Action
Krazy Ivan	THQ	Mar.	Action
MachWarrior 2	Acclaim	Mar.	Simulation
SC.U.D.	Sega Soft	Mar.	Act/Shooter
Shadow	Readysoft	Mar.	Act/Adv
Swagman	Edios	Mar.	Adventure
VR Baseball	Interplay	Mar.	Sports
VR Pool	Interplay	Mar.	Sports
Arkas Power Soccer	THQ	April	Sports
All-Star Baseball '97	Acclaim	April	Sports
Armed	Interplay	April	Action
Assault Rpg	THQ	April	Action
Beclars	GT Interactive	April	Action
Brunswick World TDC	THQ	April	Sports
Caesar's World of Gambling	Interplay	April	Simulation
Cyberbots	Capcom	April	Fighting
Lunacy	Atlas	April	RPG
NRA Action '97	Sega	April	Sports
Syndicate Wars	EA	April	Action
JP2: Lost World	Sega	May	Action
Mega Knight Ryzorth	Working Designs	May	Act/RPG
Marvel Super Heroes	Capcom	May	Fighting
NFL Unleashed	Sega	May	Sports
Timon & Pumba	THQ	May	Action



- **New video game TV show debuts**
- **MK4 postponed until July**
- **Tekken movie this summer**
- **Metroid 64 and Kid Icarus 64 update**
- **1998 PlayStation 2 release**
- **Mega Man Neo for N64 at E'**

Welcome, welcome one and all to this month's episode of Quartermann, home of the juiciest video game info in all the land. As loyal and obedient servants to hardcore gamers everywhere, the Q-crew feels that it's our duty to excavate and then inform you, the reader, of all covert game-related news that the game companies don't want you to know about. Plus, we just love to see them squirm. Anyway, on with the show...

Speaking of shows, the Q-Mann recently got a chance to see an early screening of *The Electric Playground*, a new video game TV show hosted by none other than Tommy Tallentire. (The Q likes to refer to him as the Elvis of video game musicians. His credits include: Earthworm Jim 2, Skeleton Warriors, Black Dawn and Spot Goes to Hollywood, just to name a few.) The word on the street says that the Fox network is very interested in adding the series to their TV lineup, as it skews toward their philosophy of cutting-edge, youth-related programming. *TEP* will highlight the latest games, gaming events, celebrities who play games, developers of games and so on.

Moving away from the boob tube and on to the big screen, our Japanese spies have uncovered news on Namco's new Tekken movie, due to hit Japanese theaters this summer. *Tekken: the Movie* will be Namco's first full-length motion picture and will feature 100 percent rendered computer graphics à la *Toy Story* and the FMV seen in Namco's current PlayStation games. The plot of *Tekken: the Movie* is said to take place sometime after Tekken 3's story line. With this movie, Namco is taking a page from the "Midway book on filmmaking." See, one of the roles of this movie is to help promote Tekken 3: the game and vice versa, which is a similar tactic Midway used with *Mortal Kombat: the Movie* and MK3...see the connection? Namco is also using this movie as a bridge between Tekken 3 and Tekken 4 (due out late 1998), and it's not just a bridge in the story line. Besides setting up a preface for T4, Namco is rumored to be using the 3-D models from the movie and importing the data for use in Tekken 4. Sega performed a similar move when they used the data from their VF2 CG illustrations collection as the basis for the 3-D models in VF3...*oiga vu, revisited*...Tekken 4 will be the perfect opportunity for Namco to use the complex 3-D models from the movie because T4 is one of the first games due out for the 64-Bit Sony PlayStation 2. The arcade version of Tekken 4 is due out around the middle of 1998, and the PS2 version should ship in early 1999.

Speaking of which, the PS2 is in the final stages of development and is slated for a 1998 release in Japan and a 1999 release in the US. More details of the PS2 specifications are finally begging to surface. The unit is said to feature an eight-speed CD drive, anywhere from six megabytes to eight megabytes of SDRAM and an updated version of the dual-analog joystick. Rumor has it, development systems will go out to key (in Sony's eyes) developers later this year. Namco (obviously) is one of the first developers in the elite group and from what we hear, they may already have early revs of the dev-systems. The short list also includes Square, Capcom, Universal Interactive Studios and, of course, Psygnosis (who are coding up the development software as we speak). Exactly how powerful the system is isn't known at this point, but a developer in the know said it would be at least as powerful as the fabled M2 console.

On a darker note, we're hearing numbings around the industry that all is not well with some of the software firms. We've all heard about the big monetary losses Acclaim is posting, and the company has gone out of their way to stress their plans to rectify the problem. Indeed, the company claims that they have a firm handle on the situation, but in this instance, the Q-Mann begs to differ. Reading between the lines, we see evidence that Acclaim's efforts may do little to overwhelm the impending financial storm just up ahead...stay tuned...In other bits, we've heard news that Sega Soft has cancelled their entire sports lineup for the Saturn for next year. Whether this is a lack of faith of the Saturn or Sega Soft's part or simply a shift of resources over to their new 64-Bit console remains to be seen.

Taking a turn back to the future, our Q-spies took an all-expense-paid vacation to the Daterworld to check out Midway's new baby, *Mortal Kombat 4*. Q-fans can rest easy, the game's development is progressing swimmingly, although the release date has been pushed back to late June/early July...why? Because if it came out two or three months sooner (the time it theoretically could be released), MK4's release wouldn't coincide with the new *Mortal Kombat* movie due this summer. And we couldn't have THAT now, could we? On the home front, MK4 is due out for the home systems this Christmas.

On the software tip, Nintendo is currently hip-deep in development with *Metroid 64* and *Kid Icarus 64* and, of course, that's good news. The bad news is that both games are a minimum of a year to two years away from release...I guess some things never change at Nintendo. Nintendo's big games for the back half of 1997 include *F-Zero 64* on cartridge and *DKC 64* on the 64 DD. *Atlas* is bringing out a skiing game (coded by the developers of *Val desers*) and a strategy/RPG game along the lines of *Dogri Battle*. Both titles are due out for the PlayStation later this year. Capcom will debut *Mega Man Neo* for the N64 at this year's Atlanta E' show in June. Well guys and gals, that's about it for this month. Next month, the Q-crew will venture off to Europe to find the light at the end of the gaming tunnel. In the meantime kiddies, let's keep an eye out for the Toasted Ho-Ho recipient of next year's Best of 1997 Issue! I'm Aud 5000!

-THE Q





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PROTOS

Here's proof that EGM brings you the first look at the newest of the new games. The following section contains everything from cut scenes to screen shots for titles in early development. Watch for updates in future Protos and more extensive coverage in upcoming Next Waves.

TOBAL 2



Following the success of their hit PlayStation fighting game Tobal No. 1, the programmers at Square have decided to go another round in the fighting arena with the sequel, Tobal 2. For some reason or another, they have dropped the "No." part of the title. Perhaps we will have an explanation as to why in the game's plot.

The first game was an innovative fighter with its ultra-smooth Hi-res Mode and 60 frames per second animation. Another unique feature was the ability to walk in a true three-dimensional environment inside the fighting arena. The sequel will certainly be showcasing these same features as well as adding new enhancements.

One immediately noticeable new feature is that the fighters now have projectile

moves. As you can see in the pictures, Chuji and Epon are tossing those fireballs around. These new special moves take full advantage of the PlayStation's excellent lighting capabilities and will bring a new element of fighting strategy into the game.

More updated features include new characters. To the right, you can see the new female fighter who has joined the mix. In addition to her, there are also some animal characters that range from a wolf to a dinosaur to a dragon!

Returning to the game is the Quest Mode. While the Quest Mode in the first game was fun, it seemed to be but a glimpse as to what it could become. So far, it looks as if the new Quest Mode has been greatly improved. There is a lot more detail to the levels as well as more varied locations.



PUBLISHER

SCEA

SYSTEM



PlayStation

THEME

Fighting/Adventure

RELEASE DATE

4th Qtr. '97

PLAYERS

1 or 2

SIZE

CD-ROM

% COMPLETE

N/A



COMING MARCH 15, 1997.

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One of the best multiplayer games ever to hit the home systems just got better. The Bomberman series comes to the Saturn and takes full advantage of its sprite processing power.

How so? Well, most of us have fond memories of great four-player Bomberman battles.

The Saturn version will allow up to 70 players to fight at the same time. You can imagine how busy the screen is going to get with 10 people trying to blow each other up at the same time. You can also imagine how messy your living room is going to be with two multitaps and 10 sets of Saturn controller wires running around everywhere.

The game features three modes of play. The Battle Mode made the series popular. Fight out battles against other human or CPU controlled opponents in a variety of unique arenas.

The Normal Mode is a one- or two-player cooperative game where you'll have to travel the world and fight an odd assortment of CPU enemies and their Bosses.

The Master Mode is similar to the Normal Mode but is more puzzle oriented. You have to find the best way out of tricky situations and do so in the shortest amount of time possible.

This newest version of Bomberman isn't the first to feature extra characters in



PUBLISHER	SYSTEM	THEME
Sega of Japan		Action
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS	SIZE % COMPLETE
Now-Japan	1-10	CD-ROM 100%

the form of animals (previously kangaroos). In the Saturn Bomberman, you will have several different dinosaurs that will give you new powers. They can help you stun opponents, lob bombs over walls and even jump over obstacles and blasts. You can even upgrade your dinosaurs to a bigger, more powerful version. Plus, these dinosaurs allow you to take an extra hit, extending your life for a few more precious seconds.

The only question is: Do all these little features offer enough new game-play to warrant a look? After all, it's the same basic game at heart. The answer: hell yes! What else do you need to know other than 10-player Bomberman?



BOMBERMAN

Psychic Force

KEY TO MOVES:

F	Forward	T	Triangle
B	Back	S	Square
U	Up	C	Circle
D	Down	X	X Button

Here is a list of moves for the nine characters in Acclaim's newest PlayStation title, *Psychic Force*. The concept of fighting in a three-dimensional cube is certainly a change from the type of gameplay that we are used to, so this extensive list of special moves should come in handy.

KEITH

Frigid Trance	B, F + <u>T</u>	30% Power Consumption
Frigid Pine	B, F + <u>C</u>	35% Power Consumption
Frigid Prism	B, DB, D, DF, F + <u>C</u>	40% Power Consumption
Frigid Seal	B, DB, D, DF, F, UF, U, UB + <u>T</u>	50% Power Consumption
Blizzard Toss	B, F, F + <u>C</u>	60% Power Consumption

BURN

Flame Shoot	B, F + <u>T</u>	30% Power Consumption
Exploder	B, F + <u>C</u>	30% Power Consumption
Triangle Heat	B, DB, D, DF, F + <u>C</u>	40% Power Consumption
Burning Rail	F, F + <u>T</u>	45% Power Consumption
Guard Phoenix	B, F, F + <u>C</u>	60% Power Consumption

EMILIO

Shining Arrow	B, F + <u>T</u>	30% Power Consumption
Prism Reflector	B, F + <u>C</u>	20% Power Consumption
Seeker Rays	D, DF, F + <u>C</u>	40% Power Consumption
Prism Seal	B, DB, D, DF, F + <u>T</u>	40% Power Consumption
Arch Angel	B, F, F + <u>C</u>	60% Power Consumption

WENDY

Air Crescent 1	D, DF, F + <u>T</u>	30% Power Consumption
Air Crescent 2	D, DF, F + <u>C</u>	30% Power Consumption
Sillfeed Dance	B, F + <u>C</u>	35% Power Consumption
Vollex Stream	F, F + <u>T</u>	45% Power Consumption
Earth Gate	B, F, F + <u>C</u>	50% Power Consumption

WONG

Dimensional Wink	B, F + <u>T</u> or <u>C</u> or <u>T+C</u>	30% Power Consumption
Destiny Selection	D, DF, F + <u>T</u> or <u>C</u>	30% Power Consumption
Illusory Imagery	F, F + <u>T</u>	30% Power Consumption
Baptism of Admonition	F, F + <u>C</u>	40% Power Consumption
Perfect World	B, DB, D, DF, F, UF, U, UB + <u>C</u>	100% Power Consumption

SONIA

Electrigger	B, F + <u>T</u>	30% Power Consumption
Magnet Anchor	B, DB, D, DF, F + <u>T</u>	40% Power Consumption
Gigantic Drill	F, F + <u>T</u>	40% Power Consumption
Teledist Charge	B, F + <u>C</u>	50% Power Consumption
Execulion	B, F, F + <u>C</u>	50% Power Consumption

GENMA

Renentu	B, F + <u>T</u> or <u>C</u> or <u>T+C</u>	20% Power Consumption
Onibidama	F, F + <u>T</u>	30% Power Consumption
Korajyu	B, DB, D, DF, F + <u>T</u>	40% Power Consumption
Fugojya	B, DB, D, DF, F + <u>T+C</u>	50% Power Consumption
Jyubakusatsu	B, F, F + <u>C</u>	60% Power Consumption

BRAD

Meteor Hammer	B, F + <u>T</u>	30% Power Consumption
Mega Pressure	F, F + <u>T</u>	40% Power Consumption
Gravity Infinity	B, F, F + <u>C</u>	50% Power Consumption
Asteroid Belt	B, DB, D, DF, F + <u>C</u>	60% Power Consumption
Satelite Fall	B, DB, D, DF, F + <u>C</u>	Any Power Consumption

GATES

Boost Arm	B, DB, D, DF, F + <u>C</u>	30% Power Consumption
Pile Banker	B, DB, D, DF, F + <u>C</u>	30% Power Consumption
Stanko Radar	B, F + <u>T</u>	30% Power Consumption
Plasma Cannon	B, DB, D, DF, F + <u>T</u>	45% Power Consumption
Orange Missile	B, F, F + <u>C</u>	60% Power Consumption



The year 1997 is definitely the year of the "three" sequels. There is Street Fighter III, Tekken 3 and now, Battle Arena Toshinden 3 is coming to the PlayStation.

In this rendition, it seems that Takara has a keen eye on the play mechanics of the PS megahit Tekken. The first thing added was a double amount of characters. Now, all the regular cast have their semi-different doppelganger versions. As in Tekken, beating the game will allow you to play as the sub-Bosses. There are also two hidden characters that only Toshinden masters will be able to play as.

As with many fighting games lately, Toshinden 3 has an extended combo system. You can now pull off

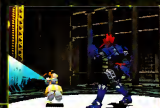
multiple-hit combos as well as juggling moves. With proper usage of the special moves, you can trap an opponent against a wall (that's right—no more ring-outs) for some massive combo damage.

The newest type of special maneuver is called the Soul Bomb. As the name suggests, it is a type of smart bomb that will rip through the other fighter if he/she is in range. The number of Soul Bombs at your disposal depends on the number of rounds you fight in per match.

Adding a bit more strategy is the super powerful Parry Attack and the ability to rebound yourself off of a wall and attack the person who just knocked you into it.

There are two different video modes that allow you to view the action in 30 or 60 frames per second. Sixty frames moves smoother and faster, but you lose the textures. Choose which mode is best for you.

With so many characters and special features, Toshinden 3 will have fans of the first two games returning for another round of fighting action.



SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
 PlayStation	September
PUBLISHER	GENRE
Playmates	Fighting
PLAYERS	SIZE
1 or 2	CD-ROM
% DONE	
	75%



TOSHINDEN 3

PROTOS

MEGA MAN
BATTLE & CHASE

In the Next Wave for Mega Man 8 for the PlayStation (see last ish-ed.), we mentioned that there was a polygon Mega Man racing game coming out in Japan. Now, we've found out that the game, Mega Man Battle & Chase, is being released in the U.S.

Simply put, Mega Man Battle & Chase is like Mario Kart with the Mega Man characters. There are a few new features to keep the game fresh and unique.

There are three different modes in it: Grand Prix Mode, Versus Mode and Time Attack Mode. There are a total of eight tracks in Grand Prix Mode and 12 in Versus Mode.

Fans of the Mega Man series will be seeing a variety of familiar faces who they can race as, or against, in the game. Racers include Mega Man himself (racing in a modified Rush), Roll (who rides in Beat, Mega Man's robot bird ally) and Protoman. In addition to the series' heroes, you can also play as the bad guys. Shadow Man, Gutsman, Iceman, Napalm Man, Spring Man, Quick Man and Bass (riding in Treble).

Hindering you in the race are some of the more minor characters from

the series. You will run across such familiar faces as Sniper Joe and the giant Rock Monster. Even giant Mets will try to slow you down.

Each of the major racers has his/her own weapon that he/she can use to fight his/her way to the front of the race. You can also let the weapon charge itself up for a more powerful shot.

There are special weapons that are earned by collecting the cones and Mets that are scattered all over the course. These weapons include a shield, mines and the ability to disable the enemy's weapon.

A Mega Man game just wouldn't be a Mega Man game if you couldn't somehow gain an enemy's powers after you beat them. After you win a race in Battle & Chase's Grand Prix Mode, you get to steal a part from your fallen foe's car. You can collect parts such as tires, spoilers and turbo engines to create your own customized car.

Since this is Mega Man's 10th anniversary, it is good to see so many games coming out starring the Blue Bomber. Battle & Chase may stray from the Mega Man formula, but it still maintains the fun of the series.



PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
Capcom		PlayStation	Racing	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
April	1 or 2	CD-ROM	60%	

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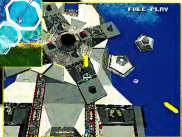
PROTOS

XEVIOUS 3D

Namco's Xevious was one of the best shooters of the '80s. The original can be found on Namco Museum Vol. 2, but for those looking for the same Xevious-type gameplay with upgraded graphics, Xevious 3D just might be what you're looking for. The original game set a standard for overhead shooters in the arcade, copied many times but never duplicated. Using polygons instead of sprite-based graphics, Xevious 3D updates the game for the '90s, with huge full-screen Bosses, levels that look strangely familiar and hordes of enemy ships.

This isn't the first time that Namco has updated a classic title. Galaxian 3 came out in a few arcades in the U.S., a huge theater-type shooter very similar to Starblade. That game has also made its way to the PlayStation in Japan, but never got much attention in the U.S.

Fans of Xevious and shooters who have been needing a fix for years will enjoy the updated style of Xevious 3D.



PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	TITLE	
Namco		 PlayStation	Shooter	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
March	1	CD-ROM	N/A	

TIME CRISIS



Combine Virtua Cop with the look of Tekken 2 and gamers will be playing Time Crisis. This shooting game from Namco puts players in the role of a super cop of sorts. As gamers make their way through level after level, they'll find that criminals tend to be easy targets. The graphics look incredible and the levels are greatly varied.

Time Crisis has something that no other shooting game has, an Action Pedal. The Action Pedal allows gamers to perform an action during play. Some actions include ducking to avoid a big hook or hiding behind a box to avoid being shot. Since Time Crisis, like many other shooting games, is set on a track, the Action Pedal gives gamers a chance to control what they're doing (even if it's only slight control).

A new shooting title with a different twist to the same old stagnating genre. Gamers just have to wait patiently until this one hits home.



PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	TITLE	
Namco		 PlayStation	Light Gun Shooter	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
July	1 or 2	CD-ROM	N/A	





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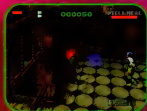
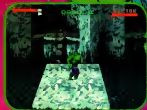
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PROTOS

SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
	March
PlayStation	THEME
	Adventure
PUBLISHER	SIZE
SCEA	CD-ROM
PLAYERS	% DONE
1	N/A

Wild Arms



Wild Arms puts the player in control of one of three different characters and each possesses unique skills and powers. The adventure's background story mixes many aspects of fantasy with science fiction while combining Japanese anime-style artwork with pre-rendered polygonal characters and backgrounds. Some other interesting points about Wild Arms are the way players can customize

the menus and icon appearances, develop their own home towns and create their own magic spells. With all this flexibility, combined with different action based on whichever character is selected, it's no wonder Wild Arms sold over 250,000 copies in Japan two weeks after release.

MAXIMUM FORCE



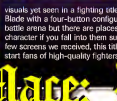
SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
Arcade Scene	March
	THEME
	Shooting
PUBLISHER	SIZE
Atari	N/A
PLAYERS	% DONE
1 or 2	N/A



From the team that created Area 51 comes Atari's latest release Maximum Force. This fast-paced shooting title gives players thousands of items and enemies to shoot through three stages of excitement. As an ex-counter terrorism agent who was working for the U.S. government, you are now on your own. Now it's your turn to take revenge on those who killed your family. Through your adventure you are allowed to go and wreak havoc through exotic places such as beautiful Easter Island and the World City Bank. You can even take on the Jungle Cartel. If you have exhausted your supply of aliens to shoot, you can get ready for Maximum Force.



PUBLISHER	SYSTEM	THEME
Atari	Arcade Scene	Fighting
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS	SIZE
April	1 or 2	% COMPLETE
		N/A
		N/A



From Atari comes the third title to use the Voodoo graphics board bringing players the sharpest visuals yet seen in a fighting title. The game plays similar to Soul Blade with a four-button configuration. There are no ring-outs in the battle arena but there are places that can cause damage to your character if you fall into them such as lava and spikes. Even from the few screens we received, this title looks to have what it takes to jump-start fans of high-quality fighters.



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REVIEW CREW

The Review Crew rates each game in several categories: visuals, sound, ingenuity and replay value. The averages of the four members' scores are listed at the bottom of the reviews. These averages are independent of the overall scores, which are displayed behind each review and based on how the games compare to other titles on the same system.

THE RATING SCALES:

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 10-Perfection | 5-Average |
| 9-Virtually flawless | 4-Best of its kind |
| 8-Splendid | 3-Fine-to-wonder |
| 7-Worthy | 2-Don't even rent |
| 6-Good, not great | 1-Flush it |



SHAWN SMITH

CURRENT FAVORITES:
Mario Kart 64
Command & Conquer
Baku Baku

Shawn spangled and boogied himself a Saturn—it's the only console he has at home. Now that there's a little downtime, he has been playing even more games than usual.



DAN HSU

CURRENT FAVORITES:
Mario Kart 64
Bomberman 64
Fighters Meganix

"Sue" just cannot understand why so many Xbox games are coming out. He thinks they are so boring. But the strange thing is, he's somehow impressed with Doom 64.



CRISPIN BOYER

CURRENT FAVORITES:
Mario Kart 64
Spider
Soul Blade

Yes, yes, yes! Mario Kart 64 is here! The Super NES original is Crispin's favorite game, and the 64-bit update is the main reason he bought the N64. But does it live like the new Kart man? Not quite.



SUSHI-X

CURRENT FAVORITES:
Street Fighter III
Mario Kart 64
Tomb Raider

Sushi's been moping around the office after getting a taste of SF3. Seems he can't wait to play a more finished version with bosses and endings! Check out his first impressions in this issue.

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Silver Awards are granted to games with a total average score of eight, while games that average nine or above receive Gold Awards.

N64

MARIO KART 64

NINTENDO



CATEGORY: RACING

BACK-UP: BATTERY

BEST FEATURE: FOUR-PLAYER MODE

WORST FEATURE: BATTLE TRACKS

ALSO TRY: WAVE RACE 64

It was a pleasure to play this one...play it again and again. Another winner comes to the Nintendo 64 direct from Nintendo. When a game is this good, where can I start? Since I only have one gripe I'll start there. I really worried more battle tracks. If there were at least two or three more I'd be more pleased (let's hope for secret tracks). Other than that, the game was perfect. The graphics were flawless and the sound fits the game nicely—both in effects and music. All of the different modes make for even more replay value even though it already has plenty. The characters are good choices as well. Need I say it—Mario Kart 64 rocks!

Once in a while, a game comes along that's so much fun to play, that you'll look past all its problems. Mario Kart 64 fits that bill. What's wrong with the game? The power-ups are imbalanced, and they help out the trailing players too much (let the losers suffer in the back!). The lightning bolt is cheap and, when used in certain stages at certain times, can pretty much insure a win for its user. But who cares! The game is a blast and takes over Super Bomberman for my favorite multiplayer game of all time. This game is several times better than the Super NES classic, and that's saying a lot. This is a reason to buy an N64.

Does MK64 offer the dead-on control, stable selection of races, multiplayer thrills and secret-pod tracks of the 16-bit original? Yes, yes, yes and...well, almost. Control with the analog pad is outstanding, although players used to the old joypads may find themselves lag, tap, tapping the stick around corners. You'll need to buy several controllers, too, since the game's two- to four-player Modes give it sky-high replay value. My only gripe is the track design. The 16 courses—which reverse when you beat the game—are long for sure, but they don't pack quite as many secrets and shortcuts as the original.

Once again, Nintendo comes away with another show-stopping title that captures your interest and keeps you coming back for more. While best experienced with four players, I found great enjoyment even with one-player games. The computer's AI has improved dramatically, with fewer cheap weapons thrown your way. I also liked how the courses changed slightly to increase difficulty for hardcore gamers (fewer or no barriers at higher CCS). I sorely miss the feather power-up and hidden shortcuts, however, and the miniscule selection of courses left me greatly disappointed. The sequel had better be HUGE.

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY VALUE

8 8 6 10

N64

TUROK

ACCLAIM



CATEGORY: SHOOTER

BACK-UP: MEMORY PACK

BEST FEATURE: WEAPONS

WORST FEATURE: CONTROL

ALSO TRY: DOOM 64

It seems like everybody and their mother knows about this one. The graphics in Turok are simply stunning, and the animation is so impressive that I just sit there in awe. For a first-person style action game, Turok is leery and bounces about practically every other one I've seen (as far as looks go) but when we get into the area of control, my thoughts change a little. The control definitely takes some getting used to—if only gamers could customize the controls, it also wouldn't mind seeing a little more variation in the levels. Another small problem is that it's too hard. Last, the weapons are awesome and so are the enemies.

First-person shooters are way too commonplace today. Turok is just another one in the masses. The only things that make it stand out are the weapons, the enemies and the levels. The weapons effects are awesome and will set a new standard for this type of game. The enemies are well-animated polygons, a refreshing change from the sprites that we are used to in Doom games. The levels are wide-open outdoor areas, as opposed to tunnels and hallways. But in the end, those furry beasts don't hurt. How many Doom games can gamers take before they are lost up?

We were all pummeled by Turok-related hype, so I was a little disappointed when I finally got to play through the game. Sure, it looks fantastic, all lush and pretty and sprawling. But the levels themselves get a little repetitive after a while, just a whole lot of running through the jungle with few levels of indoor areas for variety. Worse yet, control takes a while to get used to. Strange as it may sound, the camera buttons control your movement, while the analog stick controls your view for aiming. I wish there was an option to switch to a more conventional control setting. Still, the enemies and animation are superb.

I've got to hand it to Turok: It's got some of the smoothest graphics in a Doom-style shooter yet. Still, I can't help but be disgruntled by the user lack of activity in the game. Rarely do you meet a horde of charge lers at one time, like a whole pack of raptors. The difficulty lies in the insanely perilous hills and strangely powerful enemies. My opinion is that the current graphics engine of Turok just isn't powerful enough to handle such details. To cover this up, a very large section of your screen is covered in fog. While this is a neat trick to mask the weaknesses, it's overused and too much of the playfield gets lost in it.

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY VALUE

9 8 4 5

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SATURN

CRUSADER: NO REMORSE

ORIGIN



CATEGORY: ACTION

BACK-UP: SYSTEM/PASSWORD

BEST FEATURE: EXPLOSIONS

WORST FEATURE: CONTROL

ALSO TRY: NOTHING LIKE IT

Crusader is a fun game but it's just not solid. Solid in the sense that there are some loose ends from a production standpoint that could've been tweaked. For example, the character animation is all too often jerky and awkward—when your character jumps it looks as if he's falling like a feather. The control is extremely complicated, maybe even too complicated. Granted all of the different buttons allow your character to do all sorts of neat actions, but it's too much. The graphics are pretty sharp and the sounds work well but I can't get over the animation and control problems. Last, I like the levels and how they are designed.

Crusader definitely has a few things going for it. Too bad it has more going against it. This shooter/action game was really pretty when it was out on the PC. Something went horribly wrong in the translation and what we have now is an extremely poor quality title. The animation is atrocious, your character looks ridiculous when he's moving around, the control is just as bad. You might curse the game in frustration as you try to steer your guy in the right direction. The only factor saving this game is that it isn't a mindless shooter. You have to use cunning and manage your equipment well to win this game.

It's easy to dismiss Crusader as being a bad game if you only play it for a few minutes. The graphics are so-so (although obviously blowing up real nice), the animation is choppy and the missions seem mostly of the repetitive, blow-stuff-up variety. But this PC port has depth: Each of the 15 missions is ultra-long and packs plenty of objectives. Fortunately, you can save your game at any time (you only get one life, so save often). It's the control that really hurts this game. The joystick is unresponsive, and simple tasks such as sidestepping and rolling are a chore, as well as sily-looking. You can't even shoot while sidestepping!

Did I ever explain my pet peeves? No? The biggest mistake a game developer can make is creating a sequel with great still graphics and horrible control. Luckily, enough unique elements are in this game to keep your interest longer than a typical shooter. The animation of your main character is incredibly choppy and that hurts. It's like the company didn't plan the game better and rushed it through the red tape. Crusader's cinematics begin to sound and look all the same after seeing the first bit. I found it really hard to see some small objects because of the tiny sizes. Moving onto platforms was nearly impossible.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
6	7	7	6

SATURN

NORSE BY NORSEWEST

INTERPLAY



CATEGORY: PUZZLE/STRATEGY

BACK-UP: PASSWORD

BEST FEATURE: THE CHARACTERS

WORST FEATURE: SHORT GAME

ALSO TRY: NOTHING LIKE IT

I didn't play the old versions extensively when they were on the Genesis and Super NES but I did like the game. It was a nice combination—Lemmings with a action/side-scroller. The new version of Last Vikings game doesn't lose anything coming over to the 32-bit machine(s). In fact, what it gains is funny animated sequences, some hilarious voices for the various characters in the game and improved graphics. I kind of wish there were more levels but I guess I'll have to settle with the 30 or so that the game features. I also like the characters the Vikings meet up with during play—for me this makes the game more fun.

Clothed as this sounds, Norse by Norsewest has that simple, magical formula that is so easy to learn and so fun to play, and yet provides enough strategic depth to challenge the experienced player. You have to steer three little lads through a myriad of traps and obstacles, and make sure that they all survive. You cannot have one Viking die, or you'll have to start over (it's unforgiving, but necessary). The only things that this game needed are better animation and larger, more colorful graphics. It's strange when a 32-bit game nowadays has the fun factor right up, but disappears when it comes to graphics.

Interplay has the right idea with this update to the 16-bit multiplatform classic Last Vikings. The developers didn't dress it up with fancy-but-distracting 3-D graphics or other useless eye candy (although the colorful visuals are still pretty sharp). The game is true to its source material. It's an immensely fun hybrid of puzzle game and side-scroller. The later levels are especially tough, but they're also rewarding if you can figure them out (aren't be a quitter!) Two players can get in on the action, too, so switching around and moving the three Vikings becomes less of a chore. You even get a few new characters to help out the heroes.

Last Vikings is an excellent puzzle game, filled with many unique tricks and traps so that you'll be thoroughly challenged every step of the way. Surprisingly, the graphics aren't dreary, but it doesn't matter as much thanks to the solid gameplay. While the cinematics don't do much for the story line, they are highly entertaining in themselves. Also peculiar is the lack of a ton of levels. After 30 levels, you may find yourself damming for more. Figuring out the Viking's and visual usefulness in each level is still the main focus, and Interplay hasn't stayed from that simple formula. Which is good, because who'd want an Olat at their door?

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
4	5	9	4

SATURN

HEXEN

GT INTERACTIVE



CATEGORY: SHOOTER

BACK-UP: PASSWORD

BEST FEATURE: SELECTABLE CHARS.

WORST FEATURE: CHOPPY MOVEMENT

ALSO TRY: POWERSLAVE

I can't praise this one off as another Doom clone because it has far too many unique features. Like the inventory system and the different weapons for the use of "mana" for ammo. The problem is that I found it hard to get into. Maybe on the PC side this game worked but it doesn't translate well to the consoles. The frame rate isn't all that great—in fact it's damn right slow when lots of enemies are on the screen. Speaking of enemies, practically all of them are very cool-looking and the AI is done well. I don't really like the way I had to go back and forth between levels to advance—I found that tedious.

The expansion date on this game has long past. Running around a 3-D environment and shooting slow-moving enemies used to be fun, when Doom first showed up. Now, it's boring. To make matters worse, Hexen looks too dated. Today's first-person shooters have higher res graphics, cooler effects and less pedestrian. Hexen does offer one thing not found anywhere else: a choice of different characters to play as. This helps a little bit: it adds variety and replay value. But once you beat the game, would you want to play it again as a different player? Probably not, unless you need another Doom game, skip Hexen.

OK, it's pretty obvious that Hexen isn't the best-looking Doom clone in the world. Its graphics, in fact, are overly pixelated and often choppy. But, the Crusader Hexen packs a few nifty features that in a way make up for the disappointing visuals. I like being able to choose from three different warriors, each of which wields different weapons and spells. The armor elements, like your ability to build up your RPG class, are a nice touch, too. Hexen's levels can get pretty long, with lots of teleporting this way and that. The password system is a pain in the butt, though; I'd rather be able to save my game anyway.

Having been a fan of the PC series, I was really looking forward to the home console versions. Sadly, the console game doesn't live up to its older sibling. Hexen does have some solid gameplay, but in this case, the graphics are required to immerse yourself in the game. The dark, pixelated enemies and backgrounds are horribly down, with rough edges and noticeable seams. Gameworks, Hexen does play very much like the PC game, but you'll quickly learn that the three characters are very unbalanced for actual play, and then all you're left with is a really small wall hit. Doom-baiters should avoid this like the plague.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
5	7	7	5

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PLAYSTATION

SOUL BLADE



NAMCO



CATEGORY: FIGHTING

BACK-UP: MEMORY CARD

BEST FEATURE: OPENING CINEMA

WORST FEATURE: NO DEPTH

ALSO TRY: STAR GLADIATOR

I'm a sucker for a good, clean fighting game. What I mean is that it's always fun to sit down and play a fighter that lends itself to two-player fighting. The graphics in *Soul Blade* are incredible. I'm not one to drool over awesome intros, but *Soul Blade* has one of the best intros in the history of video gaming. But let's get back into the game. What's nice is that once you play the One-player Mode you can move onto the two-player portion. Then there's the Story Mode where you can find new weapons and new techniques. The moves are simple, but cool-looking—I like that. *Soul Blade* is a really fun fighter, worth the price.

If *Soul Blade* would've been around when I made the Top 100 Cinema list (Issue #66, Letters section), it would've won the number-one spot, hands down. The game itself is nothing to sneeze at either. You won't find anything to complain about when it comes to the animation and the polygons. You also won't have any complaints on the number of moves and combos available in the game. You might complain, however, that the game doesn't require much technique to play. It's a straightforward and shallow fighter that relies heavily on button-tapping combos (Judo-combo). It's not a bad Tekken 2 successor, but it's not fantastic.

Namco certainly isn't hurting its track record with this game. Just like the PlayStation Tekken games, SB is every bit as good as the arcade fighter—and in some ways better. My favorite addition is the Story Mode, which lets you wander the land, battling all the fighters and collecting their weapons. The rendered arena cinema is easily the most spectacular piece of FMV ever seen in a game (although it does set you up for some disappointment when you see the endings, in which the fighters look the same as they do during the game). Is it better than Tekken 2? No. But keep in mind that I ain't too crazy about block-buff fighters.

Namco seems to have written the book on arcade translations, especially since every one they've done for the PlayStation has outperformed the arcade version (just as *Tekken* and *Tekken 2* are best at home, so is *Soul Blade*). The additional Story Mode is incredibly innovative, with setting tasks or goals to complete before you can advance, like knocking your opponent out of the ring. After which, getting the special weapons adds a dimension unheard-of in the arcades. On a sour note, the button-tap technique is a lazy fighting engine that doesn't do the graphics justice. I think a new interface is needed for 3-D fighters.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
9	9	7	8

PLAYSTATION

SPIDER



BMG INTERACTIVE

CATEGORY: SIDE-SCROLLER

BACK-UP: MEM CARD/PASSWORD

BEST FEATURE: EIGHT LEGS OF FUN

WORST FEATURE: CAMERA VIEWS

ALSO TRY: PANDEMONIUM!

When I first saw this title awhile ago at E! I was pretty excited. Now it's complete, and I'm even more happy to sit down and play *Spider*. The graphics are great and the control is easy. It's neat that you can control the spider all over the place and use webbing to hang from objects—you can actually interact with the environments. The variety of levels help in making the game interesting. In fact, the game is pretty nonlinear for a side-scroller. Although some of the enemy explosions are weird-looking, most of the enemies are cool. One thing that could've been tweaked was the changing camera views.

Be warned. *Spider* is another one of those 2-D games hidden in a 3-D environment. This is not bad in itself, but what you basically have is a decent platform game that looks better than it plays. *Spider* does offer some fun features that make it stand out over games like *Pandemonium!*. Things like special weapons and the ability to climb onto any surface makes *Spider* worth looking at. Other factors hold *Spider* back. First, the control interrupts the smooth flow of the game (you need to adjust yourself all the time, and jumping accurately is a pain). Second, the game crawls along too slowly. A fancy game, but it's not terribly exciting.

Spider delivers everything you'd want in a platform game—sharp graphics, great control and sprawling levels. Just keep reminding yourself that it's supposed to be a platform game, not a 3-D, go-anywhere Tomb Raider-style adventure. Although its gameplay is similar to that of *Pandemonium!*, I like *Spider* a little better. Its levels aren't as linear and allow for more exploration. The seven bonus levels are huge, too—as big as the regular stages. The camera doesn't always work well, though. You lose sight of your spider when he crawls beneath platforms or into some passages, and you can't fight what you can't see.

First off, let me say that *Spider* is nothing like I expected when I first saw it. I truly believed that little could compare to a full 3-D spider simulator, where you could climb anywhere in a three-dimensional world. Boy was I way off! The *Pandemonium!* engine seems directly ported over to *Spider*, with little to separate it from the other "pseudo-3-D," 2-D platform games. I loved the weaponry at your disposal, and the method by which you upgrade, as well as the opening camera sequence. After the bells and whistles, you still end up with a washed, platform engine. Don't get me wrong, the graphics ARE stunning, and worth a try.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
8	8	8	7

PLAYSTATION

CODENAME: TENKA



PSYGNOSIS

CATEGORY: SHOOTER

BACK-UP: MEMORY CARD

BEST FEATURE: ENEMIES

WORST FEATURE: REPETITIVE LEVELS

ALSO TRY: DISRUPTOR

There are two things that bug me about *Codename: Tenka*. First, it's a first-person game that doesn't have any memorable features that really set it apart from others. The graphic effects are incredible but sometimes almost too dark. It seems like there were only slight variations in gameplay in the different levels. The story line is strange in a good way but the voice-acting during the cinemas is very poor. The story line does go well with the progression of the levels. The enemies are well-armed and really weird (even in a good way). It's definitely one to rent, but unfortunately it probably will get lost in the shuffle of Doomish games.

Codename: Tenka is one of the most uninspiring titles that I have played recently. I can't see a draw for this game at all. I did like the enemies; they are sly and swift. That gives *Tenka* the slight bit of excitement that Doom games need, but the problems are plentiful. First, the levels almost all look alike—dark and repetitive. You might find yourself retracing your steps often as you try to figure out where you are. Second, the wall textures aren't all properly oriented. Nothing destroys the immersive feeling of a 3-D game quicker than seeing seams everywhere. And what's up with the bowling sound you get when you pick up scores?

Codename: Tenka earns points for being a true 3-D first-person shooter—and it's a pretty snazzy-looking one at that. But then it loses points for being a little on the dull side. As I wandered around the game's dark, stark hallways, I got kinda bored. The levels just don't pack the puzzles or personality of an *Id*-inspired shooter. They do look pretty darn nice, though—even better than *Alien Trilogy's* environments. Most objects and walls lack hard angles, so everything has a rounded, more natural look. The lighting effects are way-out, too. It's the enemies, though, that truly stand out. The spider-head bad guys will give you nightmares.

When you take a look at the typical first-person shooter, you'll quickly notice the only games that truly provide a pleasurable and memorable experience are the ones that have many traps, puzzles and flocks of enemies swarming at you. *Codename: Tenka* contains very little of any of these important elements, and even the walls look synthetic. Nothing stands out as being important to the game but shoot, shoot, shoot. The cinemas, while cheesy, do stay consistent with the plot line, a small bonus for a small game. I do think, however, that this game is a good step for Psygnosis to stretch their 3-D muscles.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
7	7	4	4

Shawn

Dan

Crispin

Sushi-X

Proof That Demons Do Exist

In the near future, mankind has conquered dimensional travel but the door we have opened swings both ways. The peaceful city you have grown up in has become a haven for dark creatures from another world— Demons! Now it's up to you and your friends to harness the hidden power within you by entering the fantasy game known as Persona.

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PLAYSTATION

NANOTEK WARRIOR

VIRGIN



CATEGORY: ACTION

BACK-UP: PASSWORD

BEST FEATURE: ARCADE GAMEPLAY

WORST FEATURE: REPETITIVE

ALSO TRY: STARWINDER

It's about time somebody brought out a good arcade-style shooter. Arcade in the sense that NanoTek Warrior is easy to get into, just had enough to be challenging and has great replay value. The graphics are incredible—great light sourcing, explosion effects and plenty of wobble. Some of the levels do get a bit repetitive, but since the levels are broken up into being on the inside and outside of tubes, as well as having different mid- and end-bosses, NW is playable all the way through. Also, the game has some neat hidden codes and other bonuses which always make things fun. NW is a great title, no doubt.

WipeOut, Starwinder, STEIN, Ranner. Even Tempest. NanoTek Warrior takes a little bit from all of these and makes a new arcade-action game. Although derived, its formula is still alluring. The weapon effects are impressive, and the game moves along at an almost mind-boggling speed. As with many arcade-style games, you might find that the long-term replay value just isn't there. After you beat it, NanoTek doesn't offer enough variety to keep you happy for long. You may be bored with it after a week or so. Still, excellent quality shooters like this are low and far between, so make sure you check it out.

NW may be a brand-new game with state-of-the-art graphics, but it plays like a blast from the past, kind of a reverse Tempest. This sucker will test your reflexes to the max, as you wind around the insides and outside of tunnels, blasting enemies and dodging obstacles. Control—which pretty much consists of jumping, shooting and rotating around the tunnels—is nearly perfect (it even lets you pull off cool-but-useless barrel rolls). The Boss levels, which play differently from the rest of the game, are especially cool. Too, since each demands a different strategy. NW is no one-night wonder, either; this shooter is challenging!

NanoTek Warrior is like a breath of fresh air to the shooter genre, grabbing some cool used concepts and creating a game that stands alone. You will be hard-pressed to find a game like it, but you'll swear you've played it before! The Boss levels are by far the best areas in NanoTek Warrior, being unique in style and execution to defeat your enemy. The rather bland tunnel areas aren't quite as innovative, but offer a steady challenge as you twist and turn very easily, straight add around the tubes. I can't expect a miracle resurrection of shooters with NanoTek Warrior, but it's certainly a step in the right direction.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
8	7	5	6

PLAYSTATION

TIGER SHARK

GT INTERACTIVE



CATEGORY: ACTION

BACK-UP: MEM CARD/PASSWORD

BEST FEATURE: DIFFERENT MISSIONS

WORST FEATURE: DIFFICULTY

ALSO TRY: DESCENT

Let me start off by saying that Tiger Shark is so bad it becomes no fun. I had high hopes for it since the original preview version we had paled in comparison to the new releasable version we received. I thought, "Hey, they really improved on this one!" But then I played more and realized that the graphics and interface were the only things improved upon. The graphics are good and so is the sound, but the game is still too hard. The levels are different enough in style so there's a little playability, but not enough to save it. Also, the intros to each level are done really well, but that doesn't make the game. Maybe a rental.

Some games advertise that you'll be going up against insurmountable forces. All those games would cover in shame if they saw Tiger Shark. This game is hard! Enemy opponents are everywhere and are practically unstoppable (there are way too many of them). They seem to have the ability to shoot you from any angle, from near or far away. I was frustrated with the numerous hits I was taking from enemies that I couldn't even see. The game is a refreshing change from the traditional space 3-D shooter. I enjoyed roaming around underwater, but the draw-it-needed some work. This is definitely a challenging game.

I have nothing against hard games, but Tiger Shark is ridiculous! Even at its easiest setting, I ended up slamming down my joystick in frustration at about the sixth level. The swarms of enemy subs, ships and aircraft just won't cut you a break—they pummeled you from every direction. If you stick with it, though, the game sends you on some cool missions. You'll escort friendly subs beneath miles of frozen ocean, destroy massive machinery while zooming around huge whirlpools—and your sub can buffle enemies both above and below the sea's surface. The murky graphics suit the theme of this submerged shooter, too.

Ouch! Talk about needing a doctor, quick! After the thrashing I received playing this totally uncool title, I need some rest! Obviously, something needs to be done about Tiger Shark's difficulty. While it's cool to be able to maneuver both above and below water in total 3-D, you cannot shoot accurately enough to destroy the ships which are after you (who, by the way, almost NEVER miss). Either you need unlimited homing missiles or slower enemies with bad aim. Either way, this is a cool game which needs balance. Be sure to rent it first to see if any last-minute tweaking eases out the gameplay.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
6	5	5	3

PLAYSTATION

REVELATIONS:
PERSONA

ATLUS



CATEGORY: RPG

BACK-UP: MEMORY CARD

BEST FEATURE: ORIGINALITY

WORST FEATURE: POOR DIALOGUE

ALSO TRY: NOTHING LIKE IT

In case you haven't figured this out by now, I'm not a huge fan of RPGs, but I still like to sit down with one if it's done well. Persona is one of those RPGs. It's an interesting enough variation on the average old story line that many RPGs have, but Persona really stands out. I really like the different views (i.e., the battle view opposed to the dungeon exploration view) and the ability to make new personas in the "velvet room." As far as I know, there aren't too many RPGs that have been set in present day—I like that feature of Persona. The game is a little weird, but I still say it's a great buy for any fan of RPGs.

Do you like originality? Do you like strange and twisted role-playing games? If your answers are yes and yes, then I suggest you run to your local store and pick up Persona. It's a game that I recommend every one at least take a look at. It certainly won't appeal to everyone (it's an acquired taste), but the game design is so fresh and original, you won't get bored playing Persona. The battles aren't the redundant sequences many traditional RPGs offer—unique enemies, battles (RP) and an interesting assortment of weapons and magical attacks makes Persona a fascinating experience. Give it a try!

Persona is kind of an oddball among the PlayStation's growing collection of RPGs. It's not set in some fancy-fair fantasy world, and its heroes aren't of the armored, fire-sprite variety. Instead, the game features a cast of—care I say it—Generation Xers, who take the equally adult perils of demon possession, dimensional permutations, dating—your basic end-of-the-world stuff. While the story was cool, it did drag a bit at times. As does travel through the game's huge city, which sprawls across an isometric map. Combat is both innovative and a pain. Battles pop up all the time, and the number of combat options is staggering.

I thoroughly enjoyed the new perspective of Persona. The premise of banishing your way out of battles really intrigues me, and Persona contains some of the BEST smack-talk I've ever seen in a game! I had to really keep it together during particularly wacky dialogue. The present-time setting is extremely unique for any RPG, and Persona pulls it off well. If anything, the multitude of options is far beyond the usual game, as the complexity gets out of hand at times. These are the times you'll wish for auto-plot or a fast-forward button to get to the action quicker. Still, if you're really into RPGs, Persona fits the bill.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY VALUE
7	7	9	3

Shawn

Dan

Crispin

Sushix

Coming Soon!



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BLOWN UP,
Shot At...
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PlayStation



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KILLER CODES

FIGHTING VIPERS

—by Sega
for Saturn

These codes were provided by Sega to help you further enjoy the game.

Options Plus Menu: Finish the game in Normal difficulty. It will be selectable on the Start/Options Screen.

B.M. and Mauler as selectable characters: Finish the game on the hardest setting with any character, and they will be selectable on the Character Select Screen by scrolling past the visible list of characters.

Kumachan as a selectable character: On the Character Select Screen, play in Versus Mode and play through at least 40 matches (more or less). He will be selectable on the Character Select Screen in the same manner as B.M. and Mauler.

Big Head Mode: Finish the game on the hardest setting in Hyper Mode, which is selectable from the Gameplay Options Screen (activated on the Character Select Screen). This will open up one of the question marks in the Option Plus Menu, which will be Big Head Mode.

Other Question Mark (No Walls Mode): Get an "OK" by every move for every character in the Training Mode. This will open up the second question mark.

STAR GLADIATOR

—by Capcom
for PlayStation

On the Character Select Screen, hold Up on the controller to choose the alter ego of your character.

Cedric McAlphin; Crandall, TX

TEMPEST X3

SYSTEM: PlayStation PUBLISHER: Interplay

CHEAT SHEET
ACCESS MORE GAMES

POWER TRIP
Get first place in Temp. at X3 and enter HVS for your initials. At the next Entry Screen, enter the code, YIFFI



This method will give you access to Tempest 2000 and the Tempest Plus games. Get a first-place high score and just enter the initials HVS as your name. At the next Entry Screen, put in the code YIFFI. Now look at the Main Menu. You'll have the new game modes at your disposal! Make sure if you have a memory card that you save this onto it. Then you will always have these new options.



Two new Game Mode Options will appear on the Game Select Screen!

PERFECT WEAPON

SYSTEM: PlayStation PUBLISHER: ASC Games

CHEAT SHEET
INVINCIBILITY

POWER TRIP
Pause the game and press Ctr. +Square +Right at the same time. Then press Left+X1+R2. You will hear a sound.



This code will make you invincible throughout the game and your life bar will never go down. In the game, press Start to pause. Then quickly press Circle+Square+Right at the same time. Let go and then quickly press Left+R1+R2 simultaneously. You will hear a sound to confirm the code was entered correctly. When you run into enemies and fight them, you will not take any damage from now on.



Even attacks from your enemies won't diminish your life bar.

BUBBLE BOBBLE

SYSTEM: PlayStation PUBLISHER: Acclaim

CHEAT SHEET
DEBUG / ORIGINAL GAME

POWER TRIP
At the Title Screen, enter the codes as shown to the right. You will be able to access two n.w. awesome mod.s



These codes will give you some new features to enhance the game, Bubble Bobble. Just enter either one of the codes at the Title Screen:

Debug Mode: Down, Up, Down, Up, Right, Down, Left, Down, Up, Down. Press R2 to get the Debug Options during play.

Original Game Mode: Right, Left, Up, Down, Up, Down, Up, Secret areas will appear on 20, 30 and 50.



Do the code at the Title Screen for the Debug Menu. Then press R2.

CRUIS'N USA

SYSTEM: Nintendo 64 PUBLISHER: Nintendo

CHEAT SHEET
ACCESS NEW TRACKS

POWER TRIP
These tricks will give you new tracks. Note: The directions at the C button are Up-C, Down-C, Left-C, Right-C.



This trick will give you access to three new tracks in the game. On "Choose Race" Screen, highlight US 101 and hold L + Left-C + Down-C to access Golden Gate Park. Highlight Beverly Hills and hold L + Up-C + Right-C. Highlight Grand Canyon and hold L + Right-C + Down-C to access San Francisco.



Dantes Reyes Hillsboro, OR Highlight one of the designated tracks and hold the correct buttons.



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is in your hands.

But time

is running

out.



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TRICKMAN TERRY'S REFERENCE GUIDE



9/96 Issue #86		
Battle Arena Toshinden 2	PS	NFL Quarterback Club '96 SAT
Bust-A-Move 2	PS	Shellshock PS
College Slam	SNES	Slam 'N Jam '98 PS
Cyberspeed	PS	Street Fighter Alpha PS
Donkey Kong Country 2	SNES	Triple Play '97 PS
GEX	PS	Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3 SAT
Iron Storm	SAT	V-Tennis PS
Jumping Flash!	PS	

10/96 Issue #87		
BladeForce	3DO	PilotWings 64 N64
Clockwork Knight 2	SAT	Resident Evil PS
Golden Axe: The Duel	SAT	Skeleton Warriors PS
Gun Griffon	SAT	Super Mario 64 N64
Gunship	PS	Tetris Attack SNES
International Track and Field	PS	Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3 SAT
Need For Speed	PS	Worms PS

11/96 Issue #88		
Bogey: Dead 6	PS	Namco Museum Vol.2 PS
DecAthlete	SAT	Need For Speed SAT
Descant	PS	PilotWings 64 N64
Die Hard Trilogy	PS	Robo Pit PS
Earthworm Jim 2	SAT	SimCity 2000 PS
Game Guru	3DO	Skeleton Warriors PS
Gun Griffon	SAT	Skeleton Warriors SAT
The Hive	PS	Starblade Alpha PS
Lemmings 3-D	PS	Super Mario 64 N64
Namco Museum Vol. 1	PS	Tetris Attack SNES
		Virtua Fighter Kids SAT

This guide is a reference to all of the game codes printed within the last six months of EGM. Note: This does not include Game Shark codes or any other codes that use a peripheral attachment.
(Look for the updates in next month's Tricks of the Trade.)

12/96 Issue #89		
Battle Arena Toshinden URA	SAT	Mortal Kombat Trilogy N64
Blest Chamber	PS	Mortal Kombat Trilogy PS
Bogey: Dead 6	PS	NFL Quarterback Club '97 PS
DecAthlete	SAT	Project Overkill PS
Final Doom	PS	Street Fighter Alpha 2 PS
Guardian Heroes	SAT	Street Fighter Alpha 2 SAT
King of Fighters '95	PS	Time Commando PS
Madden NFL '97	PS	Tokyo Highway Battle PS
		Virtua Fighter Kids SAT

1/97 Issue #90		
Battle Arena Toshinden URA	SAT	PilotWings 64 N64
DecAthlete	SAT	Project Overkill PS
Die Hard Trilogy	PS	Star Gladiator PS
Gun Griffon	SAT	Street Fighter Alpha 2 SAT
Gunship	PS	Super Mario 64 N64
Loaded	SAT	Time Commando PS
Machine Head	PS	Tobal No. 1 PS
Motor Toon Grand Prix	PS	Tomb Raider PS
Namco Museum Vol. 2	PS	Triple Play '97 PS
NFL Quarterback Club '97	SAT	Twisted Metal 2 PS
NHL Powerplay '96	SAT	Wave Race 64 N64
		WipeOut XL PS

2/97 Issue #91		
2Extreme	PS	NBA Jam Extreme PS
Beyond the Beyond	PS	Pandemonium! PS
Cruis'n USA	N64	Power Move Pro Wrestling PS
Daytons USA: CCE	SAT	Space Jam PS
Killer Instinct Gold	N64	Star Gladiator PS
Mortal Kombat Trilogy	N64	Street Racer PS
NBA Hang Time	N64	Tomb Raider SAT
		Wayne Gretzky 3D Hockey N64

CRUIS'N USA

SYSTEM: **Nintendo 64**

PUBLISHER: **Nintendo**



First, get a high score during any race and then scroll down to the bottom of the high score's list and hold Down-Left to make the conveyor belt move. After around 30 or more seconds, a head will scroll by. Now, exit and get back to the Car Select Screen. Choose either the bus or police car by holding Up-C, Left-C and Down-C at the same time and scrolling through the cars. At any time during the race, tap Brake, Brake, then hold the Gas button. Your lights (and sirens) will activate.



Dave Toister By pressing Brake, Brake, then holding
Petaluma, CA Gas, you'll turn on the lights and sirens!

GRID RUNNER

SYSTEM: Saturn PUBLISHER: Virgin Interactive

CHEAT SHEET

SPECIAL EASTER EGGS

POWER TRIP
Access the Restore Game Option and then go to the "Enter Password" Screen. Enter any of these codes as shown.

Access the Restore Game Option. On this screen, highlight "Enter Password" and go into this screen. Enter the following codes: **Free For All:** Up, Y, A, Right, Up, Y, B, Down, Right, Down. **Get All Flags:** Down, Y, Right, A, Right, Up, Right, B, A, Down. **Credit Heads:** A, Y, A, Right, Down, Y, Up, Right, Right, A.



At this screen, enter the password with the buttons as shown here.

NHL FACEOFF '97

SYSTEM: PlayStation PUBLISHER: SCEA

CHEAT SHEET

SUPER PLAYERS TRICK

POWER TRIP
Pick a name from the back of the manual as the credits. Change their number, position and weight for 99 overall.

On the Main Menu, choose the Rosters Option. Then choose Create Player. Enter one of the names from the credits in the back of your instruction booklet. Put in 1 for their number, F for the position and 150 for their weight. Press Triangle to exit. Go to Sign Free Agent. This player will have 99 overall for everything! **Michael Holden; Deerfield, IL**



Enter a manual name and set some specifics for high attribute players.

IRON MAN/X-O MANOWAR IN HEAVY METAL

SYSTEM: PlayStation PUBLISHER: Acclaim

CHEAT SHEET

INCREDIBLE PASSWORDS

POWER TRIP
Enter one of these passwords for either one- or two-player game to start on the last level with many advantages!

These passwords will let you have full armor, boost, weapons and 99 lives! On the Password Screen, enter one of these codes: **One-Player—End Level:**
C04A77077777
777777777777
Two-Players—End Level:
C02A77X7777777
777777777777

Allen Hillsbery; Hillsboro, OR



From the Title Screen enter the Password Option and put in a code.

STAR GLADIATOR

SYSTEM: PlayStation PUBLISHER: Capcom

CHEAT SHEET

WALL OPTION

POWER TRIP
In Difficulty 4 or above, you must beat the game to get the "Wall" in the Options Screen. Turn it on in this screen.

Complete the game on Level 4 difficulty or above. You will receive the reward of a "Wall" Option. Find this and turn it on in the Options Screen. This will put an invisible wall around the arena. Larger hits will now make you or your opponent fly farther too, especially when hit out of the ring with a special move. **Cedric McAlpin; Crandall, TX**



Beat the game on Difficulty 4 or above to receive this "Wall" Option.

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REWRITING THE STREET FIGHTER LEGEND

Six years. That's a long time to beta-test a sequel—even one of this stature. Yet this is exactly what Capcom decided to do with Street Fighter III, despite the jeers and hisses of rabid gamers who claimed Capcom couldn't count to three. Not surprisingly, when the EGM staff was invited to play the first U.S. testing of Street Fighter III, our top fighting gurus jumped on the next plane to California!

The hype surrounding this game has been so large, none of us could hardly sleep the night before the unveiling. And why not? Street Fighter III promises a new level of fighting never before seen, with animation rivaling the best polygon fighters, yet completely drawn by hand. The new CPS III hardware uses a CD-ROM drive for a staggering 776 Megabits of RAM, easily the most storage-hungry fighting game ever. For graphics, 64 colors per animated sprite and 32,000 color backgrounds are handled with ease. The result of which is animation 150-250 percent smoother than any previous Street Fighter title to date. For example, the simple four-step fireball attack now uses 14 meticulously drawn frames of animation.

If graphics were the only feature gamers cared about, this wouldn't be

Street Fighter. Capcom knew it had to come up with a whole new way to fight, and for the past six years, gamers have been playtesting Street Fighter III while never knowing it. New techniques seen in Darkstalkers, Marvel Super Heroes and Street Fighter Alpha 1 and 2 are all prototypes for the compilation seen here. Gone are the superfluous Custom Combos and simple Alpha Counters. Say goodbye to even simple air blocking!

The new engine is far simpler than anything since Super Street Fighter II Turbo, and that's a good thing. For the past few years, many gamers, including most of the EGM staff, have worried about the berserk nature of the latest Capcom fighters. You would almost never see a good face-off or a well-thought strategy. It was just a bunch of newbies, whaling on the buttons, and doing too well too easily. Street Fighter was about technique, not random flurry! Now, gamers can relax, as the old formula is back in place with only a couple of new twists to enhance the gameplay for experts, not the untrained wanna-bees. Even the Super Combo System is simplified, yet enhanced to

add more strategy and options. Take a good look on the following pages, groups. This is what you've been waiting for: definitive coverage on how SFIII plays, and what it will offer you, the gamer! You'll learn about Super Arts, Blocking, how to use the Stun Meter (rumored to be a Chi Meter in earlier issues) and revisit the Super Jump. You'll also be formally introduced to the main player-characters who star in this sure blockbuster hit.

Once you've wiped your drool from these pages, begin preparing for next issue, when we go in-depth into the characters themselves and break down their strengths and weaknesses. We'll look at their special attacks and give you the skinny on why you should seriously think about switching characters this year.

Shoryuken!

STREET FIGHTER III

NEW GENERATION



You thought they were Super Combos. Well, you were wrong. Now they're called Super Arts, an enhanced version of the Super Combo system. Each character has three distinct Super Arts to choose from. Depending on your choice, you will be able to build up one to three actual Supers, not levels of Supers. Level 3 Supers are a thing of the past. Having your Super Meter at Level 3 means you can unleash three Supers, and that's it. Also, the length of the Super Meter changes to compensate for the power of the Super in question. The stronger the Super, the longer it takes to build up the Chi necessary to unleash it. This has to be the smartest change of Street Fighter III.



Different Super Arts mean different Super Meters, which max at different levels.



Each Super Art has a unique amount of Chi to build before unleashing it. Choose wisely...

BLOCKING

Remember Alpha Counters? Remember Air Blocks? Well, both of those are gone and replaced by an all-new technique called Aggressive Blocking. By tapping forward at the instant you get hit, you will flash and block the attack with no stun time or damage taken. While this can be done in the air, it's very difficult. The motion for this effective countering mechanism is not set, so don't groan yet. Think of it as a Custom Alpha Counter that also doesn't take any energy from your Super Meter! That's right, it's a STANDARD move. Of course, the bad thing about this (or is it?), is that experts will quickly get down the timing and be able to trounce a newbie. Heh, heh!!



Blocking is the suitable replacement to the easy Alpha Counter, and sets up parrying.



Air Blocking can now only be accomplished by tapping forward in your jump, which is hard.

STUN METER

No longer will you be clueless about when your opponent will be stunned. The new Stun Meter, located below the life bar, measures your equilibrium, and once it's full, you become stunned. It also tracks your recovery from a painful series of blows. This bar is also of different lengths depending on which character you choose. Obviously, Alex and Dudley are harder to stun than Ibuki. Otherwise, the meter has no real purpose. Interestingly enough, the only reason for this bar seems to be the inclusion of special dizzying attacks, like Ryu's Shocking Fireball. Gamers will quickly get used to keeping a close eye on their Stun Meter to avoid becoming pulp.



A good player will not only watch his foe's Stun Meter but his own, or else he'll be toast.



Certain attacks will stun faster than others, use this new bar to fight effectively in a pinch.

SUPER JUMP

This has to be the lamest addition to Street Fighter III, but it doesn't hurt either. To Super Jump, push Down, then Up quickly, then get hit REALLY hard in the way down...not a good strategy.



Doing a Super Jump is NOT a good idea... unless you're sadistic or suicidal.





NEXT GENERATION SUPER ART SELECTION

If you're wondering how effective this new Super Arts Select is going to be, stop wondering! Now you can expect much greater strategy than simply picking a character. You will quickly find which Super Arts work more effectively against which characters, and you're sure to find a favorite right away. True, we've been spoiled by the old Alpha Super Combos, but now you actually

have to think about what kind of trash you want to have. If you will be enjoying heavily on quick comebacks, pick a powerful Super Art. If you want to use the Super Arts as a deterrent, pick a weaker, yet effective one. It all boils down to a return to the basics of classic Street Fighter strategy which made the SF series so popular. Now, this IS bad news for you newbies, as once again, you'll be

pummeled handily by more experienced players. But isn't that what made Street Fighter so cool? The challenge is back, and no longer will random button pushing get you anywhere. The Super Arts Selection is the culmination of several years of testing, and it works. Another interesting aspect of the Super Arts is that they can interrupt nearly ANY ground-based attack, even a Dragon Punch!



Ryu hasn't changed much over the years. He's still looking for the perfect balance of spirit and strength, and his training hasn't stopped for an instant. He carries his dulled bag from the anime series, and when he finds a worthy opponent, he sets it down and gets busy. The years are starting to show, however, and his strength has greatly improved. Please note that all of Ryu's Super Arts are either Fireball or Dragon Punch based, as they should be, since he is the fireball master. Gone is his Hurricane Kick Super Combo from the Alpha series. He has yet to master the red fireball, and it bothers him that such a simple art eludes him. Instead, he's mastered the Electric Fireball Super Art (if selected).



The Super Fireball now has a force wave that makes it harder to jump over to avoid.



This is the ultimate in power! The Power Dragon Punch removes 50 percent of your foe's life!



The Electric Fireball not only is unblockable, but it stuns if you hold down Punch longer.

SUPER ART I
II
III SELECTION



Ken is now a father, so Elza doesn't want him to go gallivanting around in various tournaments. She'll only let him fight if Ryu is a part of the contest. Ken doesn't like this, but he keeps training anyway. He now has perfected the Vacuum Hurricane Kick Super Art (if selected), that Capcom erroneously gave to Ryu in the Alpha series. His Ground Roll is forgotten, yet he remains a solid fighter with his powerful kicks and deadly Dragon Punches. No gamer will want to pass up the chance to unleash Ken's special brand of fury, as he seems to be one of the low characters who can go berserk, yet remain a damaging force in Street Fighter III.



The Multidragon Punch works much like the old version, but it's much harder to avoid.



The Vacuum Dragon Punch rises VERY high in the air and does incredible damage.



Ken can unleash a massive Hurricane Kick, far flashier than Ryu's old Super Combo.

SUPER ART I
II
III SELECTION

200,000,000 years after the last dinosaur died...



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TUROK
DINOSAUR HUNTER



ALEX

Alex is a central character from Manhattan in the new Street Fighter universe. Alex was orphaned at a young age, and later raised by his father's best friend Tom, a former Army instructor, managed a gym and worked out every day, helping Alex become the formidable fighter he is today. When Tom was defeated by a mysterious fighter, Alex began a quest to locate this man and crush him in Tom's honor. Alex is a hardened man, who uses his awesome gripping strength to beat his opponents mercilessly. He has learned from former World Warriors like Zangief, Adon and Birdie, and can select some of their Super Combos as his Super Arts.



Straight out of Zangief's training manual, this deadly Art can deal almost half your life.



You'll quickly recognize Adon's Punch Flurry here, but with far more power backing it up.



After watching Birdie dizzy an opponent with his Level 3 Headbutt, Alex added this move.

**SUPER ART
I
II
III**



ELENA

The warrior princess from Africa is an expert of the Capoeira style, and her vague movement often confuses opponents. She has extremely powerful legs to balance her upper-body weaknesses. In fact, you'll notice that she has no punch attacks at all, which can make her an awkward fighter to use. Still, after getting used to her seemingly wild kicks, you'll see how effective she is. Her father, the tribal leader, studied medicine in France, and Elena hopes to follow in his footsteps one day. This shows as one of her Super Arts is Healing! She is able to tap into the strength of Mother Earth to enhance her own stamina and strength.



This hopping attack is very effective against air and ground attacks. Use it often!



The Brave Dance is only effective when up close, but it packs a larger punch, er, kick.



The ability to heal herself makes Elena even more deadly. She can be knocked out of this.

**SUPER ART
I
II
III**



ORO

Oro is a strange fighter who is over 140 years old. He hasn't found many challengers worthy of his full strength, so he has bound one of his arms to make the fight "fair" for his opponent. He lives in the Amazon caves as a hermit, and only likes the company of wild animals. His Senryaku style is very artistic, and he searches for a worthy student to succeed him. As a fighter, he can be hard to use as one of the few characters who has charging special attacks. He may be compared to Guile, but he isn't nearly as effective, thanks to his slowness and weak defense. It will take a dedicated gamer to master him well enough to be useful against the other characters.



This is by far his best and deadliest Art. The multihit can be done at least twice!



This Chi blast is great for short-range fighters, but useless against fireball throwers.



Oro surrounds himself with a protective ring of rocks and junk to toss at opponents.

**SUPER ART
I
II
III**



NECRO

Born in a small Russian village by a lake, Necro had few opportunities as a child. After Moscow's collapse, he wandered Moscow, where he was abducted by an organization run by a man named GI. He was put through several horrifying experiments and was mutated into his current agile form. His limbs are as flexible as rubber, yet hard as steel. He fights for his captors, but he secretly wishes to be free of them. He looks for the opportunity to flee at every match, but so far he hasn't escaped. Gamers will have a hard time using Necro due to his wild attacks and slow frame. He does have very good reach, and is similar to Dhalsim.



I MAGNETIC STORM



This awesome Super Art pulls your opponent into the electricity from anywhere on the screen!

II SLUM DANCE



This Super Art is hard to manage unless up close, where Necro is weakest.

III ELECTRIC SNAKE



The Electric Snake is a deadly mid-range attack that powers up easily. Use it often.

SUPER ART I
II
III



IBUKI

Ibuki is rumored to be Geki's daughter, and judging from her attacks, it may be true! (Geki was the original ninja in the first Street Fighter game.) In fact, when Ibuki loses a round, a character looking very much like Geki will appear hovering in the background. Ibuki is just a young schoolgirl from Japan who has been training since childhood with her friends. At heart, she is carefree and loves daydreaming. In a fight, she is very serious and meticulously finds her opponent's weakness and exploits it. She will certainly be one of the new favorite fighters, since her balance of offense and defense is very well done. She is a babe to fireball throwers everywhere, with the only air projectile!



I KASUMI-SUZAKU



This multi-air projectile move is not overly powerful, but it's a great deterrent.

II YOROI-DOUSHI



While not her most powerful Art, as it needs to be close, it is good against air attacks too.

III KIRIN-KYAKU



Her strongest, yet most easily avoided Super Art is best used in a combo interrupt.

SUPER ART I
II
III



DUDLEY

Dudley is a rich businessman who loves to box. While small for a boxer, he has made up for that in technique. His father was also a successful athlete, so Dudley enjoys roaming the streets for a fight to earn his father's acceptance. He is unmatched in punch speed, and can quickly out-box anyone once inside. As a character, gamers will be inclined to think he is another Balrog or Mike, but he is far easier to use effectively. In fact, his well-rounded attacks and excellent stamina make him a deadly opponent for any character. Beware his "dropped guard" auto-counter defense!



I ROCKET UPPERCUT



Borrowed from Ken, this Dragon Punch Art hits for a large amount of damage.

II ROLLING THUNDER



Adon must have a school somewhere, as his multipunch Super shows up here again.

III CORKSCREW BLOW



This Super Art is a much stronger variant of Rose's special attack from SF Alpha 2.

SUPER ART I
II
III

KING'S FIELD II

ASCII
ENTERTAINMENT

What it takes to make an epic RPG/Adventure game

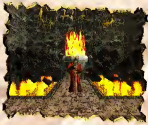


**Mad Dog
McGamer**

King's Field II, following on the heels of the wildly successful original, is hands down the best thing to happen to the PlayStation! Every aspect that made the original a hit are back - with reinforcements! ASCII has made an incredible effort to give you the best RPG to find its way to the home market. Making an encore performance are the artfully designed landscapes and brilliant effects of the first 360°, fully rendered masterpiece, but this time, ASCII has included a host of improvements that will fulfill your every fantasy!



Story line, sound, action and graphics made their way to the top of ASCII's to do list with upgrades ranging from original compositions in beautiful stereo sound to SGI rendered cut sequences!



The blood red skies of Verdite look on as a lone figure ventures out into the grimy scene of carnage and death. Austin Lake Forester, prince of the bedridden kingdom of Verdite unshackles the mighty Excollector and prepares his heart and soul for the journey just set before him.



The young prince had listened in horror as Leon spun the tale of the past ten years of chaos and destruction. After Alexander's triumphant return from Melanar with the Moonlight Sword, peace had ensued for five years in the great kingdom as the peasants grew soft... lulled by the prosperity and peace they had enjoyed. But five years later, the sun shone for the last time on Verdite, a great storm was seen on the horizon - a storm with intent of the purest evil. Lightning struck the tower, utterly shattering the Moonlight Sword, and the Holy King, John Alfred Forester fell ill. When the king recovered, he was a changed man. It was as if the devil himself had taken the throne of Verdite. The reign of terror he ushered in after his recovery had no parallel in all of history. Evil demons of every conquering imagination took to the kingdom like a hungry plague, littering the beautiful hills and plains with the terrible carnage only a bloodthirsty God could permit. Alexander had tried in vain to help his former friend, the king, but after finding only the remaining hilt of the great Moonlight Sword, he gave his life to seal the Demon King within the castle walls.



How could Lake's own father have done such terrible things? Lake's struggle was brief. The deeds that had transpired over the past ten years would have to be met with the terrible steel of battle, his was the quest for blood... the blood of his own demon father, King John Alfred Forester - KING-Holy King of Verdite!

This will be your quest in ASCII's sequel to last year's Smash Hit, King's Field.



First on the boards was the Story line. In response to consumer requests, and their own dreams for the sequel, ASCII employed a team of experts in the RPG and writing fields to breath the life into King's Field II that would make it a timeless classic. Austin Leininger, formerly "Sir Garnabus" of GamePro Magazine worked with the rewrite along with ASCII's own Jane Cowley and expert GameMasters David Silveira and Mark Johnson to bring the flare of professional Gamers into the plotline, making King's Field II one of the first RPG's to hit the PlayStation completely written for the American Gamer!



Packs, clans, and families of previously undiscovered monsters ravage Verdite as you battle against them with an improved arsenal of over twenty new weapons along with several old favorites! Over 100 new items await your discovery along with the arrival of well over 50 completely new breeds of monsters. These improvements

complement the plot well as you journey through the villages of your kingdom speaking with well developed characters that will suck you into their world within moments! ASCII spent a lot of time on the development of new characters in King's Field II. Humor, depth, personality, and history can be found in every character you encounter. Along with each meeting comes a chance for additional sub-plots - and of course, the acquisition of more items and power - as you involve yourself in the lives of your royal subjects and your kingdom.



Naturally, ASCII took the time to improve on the knowledge, use, and appearance of magical spells as well! Forty different magics in five disciplines can be at your command. All magics are either new, or have been redesigned to look and sound as powerful as the gods who invented them!

Next on ASCII's list was the question of sound. As in the original, King's Field II undertones your quest with the terrible wails and screams of the enemy. Those same battle cries of your flesh-hungry enemies louden as they approach, heightening the sense of reality in the game. In addition to this old favorite is the host of original music,

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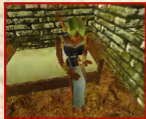


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written solely for use in King's Field II. The scores of new music are beautifully composed in stereo to complement whatever scene you are faced with, bringing tension and climax along with a beautifully felt ambiance throughout the game.

Of course, what would an RPG be in modern life without action? ASCII has taken great pains to provide as much wonderfully gory and personally satisfying carnage as possible! Battles rage throughout your quest with new enemies, new magics, and new weapons. Even battles of epic proportions ensue as you take on the Gods themselves! Additionally, ASCII included several cut sequences in full SGI rendering. Key points in the game are perfectly ushered in with these awesome action scenes of graphical prowess.



Along with the enhanced character definition and overall improvements on landscape and character design, what could possibly make this game any better? Well... perhaps a copy of ASCII's King's Field II Strategy Guide! The same talents and energies that created the King's Field II masterpiece came together again to bring you the strategy book - actually written by the same hand that wrote the game itself! Who better to know than he who was the creator?! The book is beautifully designed of high quality paper and crystal clarity.

ASCII offers all of this, wrapped up in a beautifully rendered 3-D world of enhanced polygon graphics with texture mapped surroundings to give a complete package of absolute perfection!

Good Luck to you, mighty warriors, the battle ahead is like none you've ever seen! Choose your weapon wisely and you might even survive!





SEAN

This new Shotokan framee quickly grabs our attention as a new Dan character, but he is much more. Born and raised in Brazil, Sean looks up to Ken, and wishes to train underneath him. He is hot-tempered and egotistical, much like Ken, but he hasn't actually learned Shotokan styles. His grandfather trained him, and he is quite powerful, but he believes Ken's tutelage will make him the best fighter ever. Despite his temper, he is very polite when not fighting, and he hates being called Dan. Gamers will enjoy his wide arsenal of attacks, some of which were meant to deal with fireball attackers like Ken and Ryu. Add his Hado-Burst Art, and he's the best!



I

HADO-BURST



Sean gets a fireball. Add this to Sean's attacks, and he's the most well-rounded foe.

II

SHORYU-CANNON



Much like Ken's Vacuum Dragon Punch, yet with greater range, but less power.

III

HYPER-TORNADO



Nothing will beat an opponent senseless like this move! Sean goes berserk with this one!

SUPER ART I II III



YUN & YANG

Yun and Yang are twin brothers with the exact same fighting style. Their personalities are vastly different however, as Yun likes the spotlight and being a leader, while Yang prefers to sit back and ponder his lot in life. Trained by their grandfather, rumored to be Gen (thanks to similar fighting styles), they are quick and deadly. Gamers will notice that Yang doesn't seem to have his own selection screen, which is true! Use the Kick buttons to select Yang and the Punch buttons to select Yun.



I

TENSHIN-SENKYUTAI



This Rising Kick Flurry is useful up close, but not from a distance. Remember Gen!

II

SOURAI-RENGEKI



This Art is much more effective from any distance, but you need to be close to hit hard.

III

GENEI-JIN



Another flurry attack is all these guys need! Still, its power is its best feature.

SUPER ART I II III

FIRST LOOK: SUSHI-X's 1997 PREDICTIONS

OK, let's get the bird stuff out of the way first. This is not what I'd call Street Fighter III. No, instead, this is what I'd call SFIII Why? Because with this new game, all of us faithful SF nuts are left holding the bag as to what happened after SF2. Who was victorious? What happened to M Bison and Akuma? Where is Sagat, the nemesis of Ryu? What about all the other favorites, like Blanka and Chun-Li? Those are but a few of the questions that Street Fighter III will leave unanswered. Capcom, you need to work on your plot lines! I hate to compare, but look at Tekken's flowing story line. Each new character is given a reason and a link to the "Bikkuriman" Not so with Street Fighter III. This game should have had closure, but maybe the upcoming SF4 will do that for us. In the meantime, shame on you!

Now that that's over, let's look at the good stuff. Capcom, you deserve a resounding ovation for the excellent work so far on SFIII's fighting engine. It is by far the best fighting

game to date, even when stacked against polygon fighters which are the rage these days. The engine shows real improvement, rather than flashy toys, which earns respect from this hardened gamer. I especially like the new characters, with the possible exception of Necro and Oro, who don't seem to hold their own against the other World Warriors. This may change, so I'll see what happens in the final product. Please, tweak them! I can't wait to see what develops, and I get to make a full review of what is sure to be my taken champion of 1997.

GONE... FOREVER?



3-D fighting with a vengeance.

They killed you. But you came back.

An avenging angel from beyond the grave.

A vigilante reborn to bring justice to the damned.

Take your unearthly powers and wreak vengeance on Jada, L.A.'s drug king,
Kali, the nin-jitsu death-bitch, Curvo, Spider Monkey and an army of lawlife thugs...

Because life after death is hell.



The Crow

city of angels



NO OBSTACLE WILL STOP YOUR
UNEARTHLY QUEST FOR VENGEANCE!



HUNT FOR THE DAMNED THROUGH
A 3D LABYRINTH OF SEEDY STREETS!



CLEAR YOUR PATH TO JUDAS WITH
SHOTGUNS, UZIS, AND MOUTON COCKTAILS!



THE SWIFT RICH OF JUSTICE!



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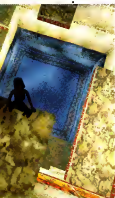
Acclaim
ENTERTAINMENT, INC.
www.acclaimgame.com



GO WHERE NO MAN
HAS EVER COME
OUT ALIVE. NOTICE
WE SAID "MAN."



IF THE SAME GRAPHICS
DON'T BLOW YOU AWAY,
ONE OF THESE WILL.



TREASURE SEEKING,
PUZZLE SOLVING, ALLIGATOR
WRESTLING, AND STILL TIME
FOR A FIGHT.

S

OMETIMES, HAVING A



Sometimes, you also need guts. Or a brain. Or quick feet. Other times, you need all of the above plus grenades, a shotgun and a matching pair of nine millimeters. Such is your fate when you control Lara Croft, heroine heartthrob of Tomb Raider.



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NOTHING LIKE A
LITTLE SWIM BEFORE
FENDING OFF A PACK
OF WOLVES



"100%, 99%, 97% - Playstation game of the year!"
Game Fan

"9.5 - Playstation game of the year!"
"Adventure game of the year!"
Ultra Game Players

"99% - Game of the year!"
PS Extreme

KILLER BODY JUST ISN'T ENOUGH.

NOT EVERYONE SEES
A BRIGHT LIGHT
JUST BEFORE DYING
(LUCKY STIFFS.)

Lara has her sights on a few ancient artifacts, and she's not going to let anything or anybody get in her way. Alligators. Wolves. Thugs. They're all tempting fate once in Lara's path. But hey, what's a little temptation? Especially when everything looks this good. In the game, we mean. Check out Tomb Raider at www.tombraider.com.



EIDOS
INTERACTIVE



TOMB RAIDER

TEKKEN 3

Development on round three of the Tekken saga is nearly 80 percent complete, and EGM has learned more tidbits and rumors about Namco's flagship fighter.

For starters, early rumblings about a Nintendo 64 version of Tekken 3 appear false. Namco looks committed to continuing its mutually beneficial relationship with Sony—but that doesn't mean Tekken 3 will be coming to the PlayStation as we know it. Rumors abound about a PlayStation VRAM upgrade that will bring the system up to par with Namco's System 12 arcade hard-

ware, on which Tekken 3 will play.

This month's feature focuses on the story of Tekken 3, which is set 20 years after the previous installment.

Don't be fooled by the familiar faces you see in the game; several of the fighters are actually the kids of previous cast members. Fighting skill, apparently, is a genetic trait.

And don't forget to check out this month's Quartermann section. The Q digs up details on an upcoming Tekken movie.

INTRODUCING RALLY JACKSON



Tekken 3's main mystery man, Rally Jackson, is still, well, a mystery. We do know he isn't a Boss character, and we know his name is tentative. But other than that, anything's possible with this period costume.



Newly discovered moves like King's Pick-up Off the Ground Grab are being slowly uncovered.



THE MISHIMA WAR COMES TO A FIERY END...

As the second Tekken tournament was drawing to a close, Jun Kazama approached Kazuya, suspecting his power was coming from Devil. Jun felt a mysterious power attracting her to him, and the two embraced. A few days later, Heihachi confronted Kazuya and attacked him. Heihachi won the battle and dropped Kazuya into a volcano. Yet Heihachi remained unaware of Devil's existence. Meanwhile, Devil tried to possess the new life in Jun's body—the unborn child of her and Kazuya—and failed.



THE RISE OF THE THIRD IRON FIST TOURNAMENT

The vengeful Heihachi has once again set his plans for world domination in motion. To buy time, he has gained the confidence of the planet's leaders by putting forth a plan for world peace. In this uncertain time, a baby is born... The infant's name is Jin Kazama, son of Tekken 2's feisty Jun and Heihachi.

Fifteen years later, a secret excavation by Heihachi's "Tekken Forces" in Central America uncovers an unusual find. In their first communicate with Heihachi, they report seeing a being known as the Toshi, the "God of Fight." Heihachi immediately heads to the site aboard his private jet.

Upon arrival he finds scattered corpses and no "God of Fight." The wheels in the head start to spin. "What is this thing?" he thinks. "Under my control, maybe I could control the world!"

Within weeks, strange disappearances occur throughout the world. Masters of the martial arts are reported missing, and no one has any answers.

Jin Kazama is now a young man of 15 years. Though he and his mother Jun live peacefully in the mountains, her intuition warns of impending danger. She tells him of a tremendous power, one that will endanger their lives. Jun explains to Jin the story of his father, grandfather and the legend of Tekken. Fearful of what lay ahead, she tells Jin to go to Heihachi if anything happens to her.

Her intuition proves right. The Toshi comes to the mountains, where he's challenged by an inexperienced Jin. The last thing Jin hears before losing consciousness is his mother yelling, "Run, run far away."

Morning sunlight awakens Jin. The house and everything around it is buried to the ground. He searches frantically for his mother, but to no avail. Following his mother's wishes, Jin seeks out Heihachi Mishima. Upon hearing of what happened, Heihachi reasons that the "God of Fight" thrives on the strong souls of others—especially the souls of Tekken fighters. Jin asks Heihachi to teach him to defeat the Toshi.

As a ploy to lure the Toshi, Jin plans to one day organize "The King of Iron Fist Tournament 3." Such a gathering of strong souls would be too much for his arch-enemy to resist.

The tournament opens four years later.





Paul Phoenix

Paul missed out on his chance to fight Kazuya in the last Iron Fist Tournament (although he did defeat his old nemesis Kuma). Now, the 46-year-old fighter is a famous martial artist. He has won scores of victories in countless fighting contests. But he still feels something is missing. Recently, a letter came to him saying that the third King of Iron Fist Tournament will be held—and he's invited. Paul believes he's in perfect condition and there is no way he could lose. Perhaps this contest will make his life complete.



He's tough. He's cheap. And now, he's, er, old.



Forest Law

Yep, you guessed it—Marshall Law's a daddy, and now his young son trains at his father's dojo. But Forest is forbidden to compete in any tournaments. Meanwhile, Paul Phoenix visits the dojo to battle Marshall. When he came this time, Marshall was away building another dojo. So Paul took the opportunity to persuade Forest to join him at the Tekken 3 tournament. Needless to say, Marshall wasn't too happy when he discovered his son was entering Tekken 3.



Like father, like son—
young Law's no wuss.



Lei WuLong

Bruce was defeated by Lei at Tekken 2, but escaped from Lei's custody. For 19 years since, Lei WuLong has solved several international crimes, even earning the name "Super Policeman." During his recent investigation into the disappearance of prominent martial artists, Lei was visited by Heihachi, who asked him to join the third Iron Fist Tournament. Curious about Heihachi's intentions, Lei decided to once again participate in the battle.



New throws abound in
Lei's arsenal of moves.



Yoshimitsu

Yoshimitsu has been helping the poor and raising funds for his scientist friend Boskonovitch, who once saved his life. Boskonovitch is conducting a study on suspended animation, which he hopes will help his ailing daughter and grant her eternal youth. But the scientist himself has become infected with a pathogenic organism. Only the blood of Toshin will kill the pathogen. Yoshimitsu vows to enter the new Tekken tournament and collect that blood. Boskonovitch and his daughter will die if he fails.



Yoshimitsu can now
attack from above.



Nina Williams

During the previous tournament, Nina was ordered to assassinate Kazuya, but she failed when she was sidetracked by her sister, Anna. Captured by Kazuya's henchmen, Nina and Anna were used as guinea pigs for Boskonovitch's experiments in suspended animation. When the God of Fight was excavated, it released a massive spiritual wave that woke Nina's soul from her 15-year slumber. Now, under the god's control and suffering from amnesia, Nina is on the hunt for Jin Kazama, whom she plans to assassinate.



Nina's kinda grumpy
after her 15-year nap.



King the Second

It's sad but true—the original King, star of Tekken 1 and 2, was murdered after the second tournament, his killer never brought to justice. A 24-year-old former ward of King's orphanage saw that the orphans were in danger of losing their home, so he donned King's mask and kept the home open. But he couldn't become very strong because his technique was learned just from watching King. Fortunately, he was visited by Armor King—who said he knew who murdered King. He offered to solve this mystery and train King the Second for the third Tekken tournament.



King 2 is way more
buff than the original.



The Stages Of Battle

Tekken 3's arenas are more detailed than ever before. They're surrounded by pseudo 3-D buildings and other structures.



NO BULL. NO HYPE. NO CRAPPY GAMES. THIS IS...

THE BEST OF

1996

ALL SYSTEMS

GAME OF THE YEAR
SUPER MARIO⁶⁴

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO SYSTEM: NINTENDO 64

No argument here: Super Mario 64 is by far the single best video game of 1996. Is it because of the exquisite, true three-dimensional graphics? Is it because of the analog controls that were perfected to a tee? Is it because of the enormous and fantastic worlds? Or is it because Super Mario 64 captures the embodiment of

perfection in a video game? No matter. Super Mario 64 took over our offices by storm. The moment we set our eyes on this masterpiece of Shigeru Miyamoto's, we realized that a new standard in video games had been set. The scary thing is, we can only expect better. If you haven't experienced Super Mario 64 yet, then you haven't experienced the best.

RUNNERS-UP

DRAGON FORCE

PUBLISHER: WORKING DESIGNS SYSTEM: SATURN



Most of the editors became instantly addicted to this brilliant strategy game by Working Designs. Need a reason to buy a Saturn? Here it is.

TOMB RAIDER

PUBLISHER: EIDOS INTERACTIVE SYSTEM: PS/SATURN

Welcome to 3-D adventuring on the 32-Bit level. Tomb Raider easily provided the largest, most detailed worlds to explore for 1996. Tomb Raider will occupy countless hours of your time.



It was not just a great year, it was a fantastic year. Three major players, Nintendo, Sony and Sega, were on the market, vying for your attention. NIGHTS showed off the powerful potential of the Sega Saturn. Crash Bandicoot demonstrated that the systems war would be a no-holds-barred one. But in the end, it was Nintendo 64's (and Shigeru Miyamoto's) Mario who captured most of the limelight.

Regardless, the competition ended up only serving one purpose: It gave video game players more games than ever to choose from. Never before have we seen such quality titles and so many of them. Hopefully, this trend will continue to rise deep into 1997 and beyond.

The following few pages will show you what was the cream of the crop; the best of the best; the...well, you get the idea. Each member of the EGM staff independently voted on each of the 26 categories. What you'll see is what the top experts in the video game industry think of what came out in 1996. Some of the results may surprise you.

On the final page of this special feature, you'll see the results of the reader surveys for 1996 (from the December 1996 issue of EGM and the 1997 Video Game Buyer's Guide). Find out what were some of your favorites for the year.

Note: Only games that were released during the calendar year 1996 are eligible for the awards. For multipatform titles, only the superior version(s), if any, are recognized.



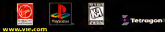
Yesterday, you were a cocky 2-D arcade shooter. Today, you totally suck.



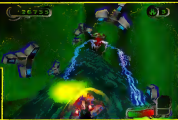
We hate to break the rude news, but you're about to be humbled. It's the 23rd century. Nano-robots are on the rampage. And you've gotta deep-six hundreds of vicious killing machines and eight virtually indestructible nano-bosses. The good news is you can run. The bad news is, in this 3-D world, you can forget about hiding in corners. At 30 FPS, it's a 32-bit firestorm of nonstop death and

destruction. Where the fighting is fast and furious enough to turn you into a certified junkie. With progressively difficult levels and an intense play environment, NanoTek Warrior offers awesome replay value. Which means just maybe, by the turn of the century,

you'll be back to your same old cocky self.



NanoTek Warrior™



NINTENDO 64 GAME OF THE YEAR

SUPER MARIO 64

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

Super Mario 64 didn't face a lot of competition in this category (only eight U.S. N64 games were available in 1996). It wouldn't have mattered, however, as this overall

Game of the Year would easily capture the N64 Game of the Year award, regardless of the competition. Super Mario 64 is an excellent enough title to sell N64 systems, all by its lonesome.



STAR WARS: SHADOWS OF EMPIRE

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

Star Wars fans can rejoice. Shadows offers a variety of different styles of gameplay, all set in the popular universe. Fly around in snow speeders while battling AT-ATs, fight fellow scoundrels Boba Fett and IG-88, explore fascinating Star Wars locales and more. SoE is a tour-de-force that all Star Wars fans must check out.



WAVE RACE 64

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

The first racing title for the N64 became an instant winner with sports and non-sports enthusiasts alike. Realistic physics and a wide variety of tracks made Wave Race 64 an ideal one- or two-player game.



RUNNERS-UP



PLAYSTATION GAME OF THE YEAR

TEKKEN 2

PUBLISHER: NAMCO

Tekken 2 is one of the best polygon fighters ever, and only the PlayStation can claim bragging rights to it. Tekken 2 offers fighting game fans 23 different characters, each with dozens of bone-crushing moves

and combos. The smooth animation is top-notch, and the controls (vital to any fighting game) are unparalleled. Beautiful cinemas (some of the best in the business) round out this great package.

RUNNERS-UP

RESIDENT EVIL

PUBLISHER: CAPCOM

This frightening horror-adventure game is one of the PlayStation's top-selling games of all time. The dark mood instantly puts you in. Voice acting aside, Resident Evil is an all-around excellent PS exclusive.



One of the biggest hits of the year is Eidos Interactive's Tomb Raider. Imagine exploring enormous levels (that would intimidate Mario) and facing great perils (that would scare away even Indiana Jones). Well, the busy and dangerous Lara Croft is ready to take on anything in this gargantuan action-adventure hit.

TOMB RAIDER

PUBLISHER: EIDOS INTERACTIVE



SATURN GAME OF THE YEAR

DRAGON FORCE

PUBLISHER: WORKING DESIGNS

Sure, Sony may have an invaluable partner in SquareSoft, but Sega has Working Designs. These good folks brought us our favorite Saturn game of 1996 (and

perhaps of all time). This strategy game has over 100 unique characters, multiple story lines and awe-inspiring army-to-army battles that would make the movie Braveheart look like a schoolyard brawl. Dragon Force is a must-buy.



TOMB RAIDER

PUBLISHER: EIDOS INTERACTIVE

Eidos created Tomb Raider from the ground up (as opposed to a typical PlayStation port) to take advantage of the Saturn's hardware. As a result, Tomb Raider is one of the best-looking 3-D games on the system, period. The outstanding level design of this action-adventure game must be seen to be believed.



SF ALPHA 2

PUBLISHER: CAPCOM

Street Fighter Alpha 2 is the best 2-D fighter to date. Capcom's expertise in that field has never been matched, and SFA2 is the best among its elite SF brethren. The Saturn boasts having the superior version.

RUNNERS-UP



BEST OF '96 SPECIAL FEATURE

SUPER NES GAME OF THE YEAR

TETRIS ATTACK

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

This puzzle game is dangerously close to being illegally addicting. Tetris Attack made such an impact at EGM that it was the game most bought by the EGM staff in 1996 (see our 1997 Buyer's Guide). The simple premise makes it a game of mass appeal; its depth makes it a hardcore gamer's delight. It's highly recommended.



RUNNERS-UP DK COUNTRY 3

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

MARIO RPG

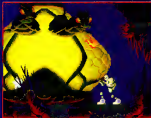
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

GENESIS GAME OF THE YEAR

VECTORMAN 2

PUBLISHER: SEGA

Although the Genesis is probably the next system to go to console heaven, it's still running on the backs of great side-scrolling action titles like Vectorman 2. You get great Bosses, a wide variety of levels and plenty of new and unique morphs. Genesis owners should pick this up. It's going to be one of the last hits you'll see.



RUNNERS-UP SONIC 3D BLAST

PUBLISHER: SEGA

TRIPLE PLAY GOLD

PUBLISHER: EA SPORTS

NEO-GEO GAME OF THE YEAR

KING OF FIGHTERS '96

PUBLISHER: SNK

You can't ask for more characters when KOF '96 offers you 27 fighters in all. And why would you have to play any other Neo-Geo fighter when most of them star in the KOF series as well? Overall, this is an excellent packaged deal for any fan of 2-D sprite-based fighting games. Plenty of moves, techniques and fun.



RUNNERS-UP SAMURAI SHODOWN III

PUBLISHER: SNK

METAL SLUG

PUBLISHER: SNK

3DO GAME OF THE YEAR

CAPTAIN QUAZAR

PUBLISHER: SPECTRUM 3DO

The competition for the 3DO this year was really tight. But as little support as there was, Captain Quazar still reigned supreme. With fast action and tons of explosions combined with one-player or two-player split-screen simultaneous play, CQ offers plenty of replay value to make up for the non-existent new releases.



RUNNERS-UP CANNON FODDER

PUBLISHER: VISION INTERACTIVE

STAR FIGHTER

PUBLISHER: SPECTRUM 3DO

HAND-HELD GAME OF THE YEAR

TETRIS ATTACK

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO SYSTEMS GAME BOY

Of course it's not as fun as the Super NES version, but even if it offers a fraction of the fun, that's enough to make Tetris Attack the best portable game of the year. This is tiny fun at its best.



RUNNERS-UP BAKU BAKU

PUBLISHER: SEGA SYSTEMS GAME GEAR

KIRBY'S BLOCKBALL

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO SYSTEMS GAME BOY

ADVENTURE GAME OF THE YEAR

SUPER MARIO 64

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO SYSTEMS NINTENDO 64

Needless to say, the magical world of Mario is one we all love, and to see it in full, luscious 3-D makes it all the better. Super Mario 64 is an adventure that will truly amaze anyone with two eyes.



RUNNERS-UP TOMB RAIDER

PUBLISHER: EIDOS INTERACTIVE SYSTEMS PS/SATURN

RESIDENT EVIL

PUBLISHER: CAPCOM SYSTEMS PLAYSTATION

ARCADE GAME OF THE YEAR

SF ALPHA 2

PUBLISHER: CAPCOM

Yes, fighting games are a dime a dozen, but this just goes to show that quality still pays. Street Fighter Alpha 2 is our favorite quarter-muncher and is our preferred way of showing off our arcade game prowess.



RUNNERS-UP CRUIS'N THE WORLD

PUBLISHER: MIDWAY/NINTENDO

VIRTUA FIGHTER 3

PUBLISHER: SEGA

BLOW DOORS OR BLOW CHOW!



FEATURES:

- 25+ cars to choose from
- Race in either direction on 5 different tracks
- Includes original Pikes Peak Hill Climb
- 12 different camera angles
- Build and design your own tracks using the first-of-its-kind track editor
- Design your own car, tires, suspension, color and more!
- 1 or 2 player action

PEAK PERFORMANCE



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BEST OF '96 SPECIAL FEATURE

**FIGHTING
GAME OF THE YEAR****TEKKEN 2**

PUBLISHER: NAMCO SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

One of the PlayStation's hottest titles is also the best overall fighting game of 1996. This honor belongs to the PlayStation exclusive, Tekken 2. It is *EGM*'s favorite pseudo 3-D fighter. It may not be as realistic as *Virtua Fighter 2*, or as flashy as *Star Gladiator*, but its depth and sheer number of characters won us all over.

**RUNNERS-UP
SF ALPHA 2**

PUBLISHER: CAPCOM SYSTEM: SATURN

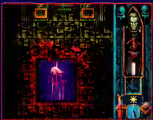
MK TRILOGY

PUBLISHER: MIDWAY SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION/NE64

**ROLE-PLAYING
GAME OF THE YEAR****LEGACY OF KAIN**

PUBLISHER: ACERVISION SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

This was a close race with *Suikoden*, but the dark and violent nature of *Kain* won. Definitely not for the young or timid, *Kain* showed us that drinking blood is healthier for us than we thought. The excellent voice work, as well as the foreboding and violent cinematics, produced the perfect mood. This RPG was truly one of its kind.

**RUNNERS-UP
SUIKODEN**

PUBLISHER: KOEIAN SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

SUPER MARIO RPG

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO SYSTEM: SUPER NES

**SIDE-SCROLLING
GAME OF THE YEAR****GUARDIAN HEROES**

PUBLISHER: SEGA SYSTEM: SATURN

Although the competition was stiff, one side-scroller came out a clear winner: Sega's *Guardian Heroes*. The different characters, the numerous special and magical attacks, the branching story lines, the Versus Mode and the anime style all combined to make *Guardian Heroes* one of the best, most memorable games of '96.

**RUNNERS-UP
DK COUNTRY 3**

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO SYSTEM: SUPER NES

KIRBY'S SUPER STAR

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO SYSTEM: SUPER NES

**STRATEGY
GAME OF THE YEAR****DRAGON FORCE**

PUBLISHER: WORKING DESIGNS SYSTEM: SATURN

Good console strategy games are few and far between. Thankfully, Working Designs was kind enough to share *Dragon Force* with us. The rich and involving story line will draw you in, and the incredible battle sequences will keep you around. Non-Saturn owners will have to suffer without this fantastic strategy game.

**RUNNERS-UP
IRON STORM**

PUBLISHER: WORKING DESIGNS SYSTEM: SATURN

WORMS

PUBLISHER: OCEAN SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION/SATURN

**FLYING
GAME OF THE YEAR****PILOTWINGS⁶⁴**

PUBLISHER: NAMCO SYSTEM: NINTENDO 64

This 64-Bit update to the Super NES classic showed how fun flying could be and demonstrated that there is more than one way to get from here to there. Fun, variety and easy-paced action gave *PW64* this award.

**RUNNERS-UP
BLACK DAWN**

PUBLISHER: VISION INTERACTIVE SYSTEM: PS/SATURN

NIGHTS

PUBLISHER: SEGA SYSTEM: SATURN

**PUZZLE
GAME OF THE YEAR****TETRIS ATTACK**

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO SYSTEM: SUPER NES

This game is so adding, our boss had to hide the office copy because playing it caused production to take a serious dive.



Everyone here owns a personal copy anyway, so we snuck those into work.

**RUNNERS-UP
BAKU BAKU**

PUBLISHER: SEGA SYSTEM: SATURN

BUST-A-MOVE 2

PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION/SATURN

**ACTION
GAME OF THE YEAR**

PUBLISHER: FOX INTERACTIVE SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

It's hard to beat a title that gives you three complete and separate action games, each truly excellent in its own right. Shoot, blow up, run over, kill...just about every violent action you can think of is in here.

**RUNNERS-UP
TWISTED METAL 2**

PUBLISHER: SCEA SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

TOMB RAIDER

PUBLISHER: EIDOS INTERACTIVE SYSTEM: PS/SATURN

SPORTS GAME OF THE YEAR

WAVE RACE 64

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO SYSTEM: NINTENDO 64

Jet-skiing on the N64 really made a big splash with the staff of EGM and EGM. Two-player competitions immediately popped up everywhere, and one-player stunt shows were the theme of the day. If you want a racing game with a twist, do yourself a favor and check out this great hit from Nintendo.



RUNNERS-UP

NFL GAMEDAY '97

PUBLISHER: SEGA SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

MADDEN NFL '97

PUBLISHER: EA SPORTS SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

SHOOTER GAME OF THE YEAR

ALIEN TRILOGY

PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION/SEGA

Doom clones are hard to find nowadays (yeah, right), but Acclaim managed to find a winner in Alien Trilogy. The Alien motif served to produce the perfect mood for a first-person shooter. Most of the levels, weapons and enemies have been taken right from the movies. Alien and Doom fans cannot afford to miss this one.



RUNNERS-UP

PANZER DRAGOON ZWEI

PUBLISHER: SEGA SYSTEM: SEGA

VIRTUA COP 2

PUBLISHER: SEGA SYSTEM: SEGA

SYSTEM OF THE YEAR

PLAYSTATION

SONY

The PlayStation won on basically one major factor: It has a greater quantity of new games than any other system right now. This means variety and this means choices. The future is bright for this upstart console.



RUNNERS-UP

NINTENDO 64

NINTENDO

SATURN

SEGA

BEST ORIGINAL CONCEPT

TECMO'S DECEPTION

PUBLISHER: TECMO SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

Tecmo brings us to the other side.

Instead of playing the hero, you play a spirit who traps and kills adventurers. Originality pays off and helps Tecmo's Deception stand out among a sea of cookie-cutter games.



RUNNERS-UP

BLAST CHAMBER

PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION SYSTEM: PS/SATURN

PERFECT WEAPON

PUBLISHER: ASC SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

COOLEST MASCOT

MARIO

NINTENDO

We loved that Crash mentioned "EGM" in a couple of TV ads, but Mario is an age-old friend. This kowable guy even took his hat off for us in Super Mario 64. So where was the X-treme Sonic in 1996? MUA.



RUNNERS-UP

CRASH BANDICOOT

SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT OF AMERICA

NIGHTS

SEGA

BEST GRAPHICS

SUPER MARIO 64

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO SYSTEM: NINTENDO 64

From the bold and beautiful colors to the large and menacing Bosses to the perfect antialiasing to the smooth-as-silk animation, Super Mario 64 is the best-looking game in 1996, without a doubt.



RUNNERS-UP

WIPEOUT XL

PUBLISHER: PENTON SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

PANZER DRAGOON ZWEI

PUBLISHER: SEGA SYSTEM: SATURN

BEST MUSIC

WIPEOUT XL

PUBLISHER: PENTON SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

This techno soundtrack was released on a separate music CD and is excellent by itself, without the game. It's qualified to be sold alongside smart drinks and ecstasy. Easily the best music for any game in 1996.



RUNNERS-UP

STAR WARS SHADOWS OF EMPIRE

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO SYSTEM: NINTENDO 64

LOADED

PUBLISHER: INTERPLAY SYSTEM: SATURN

BEST PERIPHERAL

NIGHTS CONTROLLER

SEGA

This analog joystick from Sega outperformed the N64 analog controller and most other analog joysticks. It felt great and the buttons were arranged nicely. Now we need to see more games that support it.



RUNNERS-UP

GAME SHARK

ATARI

SEGA SATURN NETLINK

SEGA

THE READERS' PICKS OF '96

NINTENDO 64 GAME OF THE YEAR:

Super Mario 64

RUNNER-UP

Mortal Kombat Trilogy
Wave Race 64**PLAYSTATION GAME OF THE YEAR:**

Resident Evil

RUNNER-UP

Tekken 2
Twisted Metal 2**SATURN GAME OF THE YEAR:**

NIGHTS

RUNNER-UP

Street Fighter Alpha 2
Virtue Cop 2**SUPER NES GAME OF THE YEAR:**

Donkey Kong Country 3

RUNNER-UP

Mario RPG
Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3**GENESIS GAME OF THE YEAR:**

Sonic 3D Blast

RUNNER-UP

Vectorman 2
Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3**NEO-Geo GAME OF THE YEAR:**

Samurai Shodown III

RUNNER-UP

King of Fighters '96

3DO GAME OF THE YEAR:

Shockwave 2

RUNNER-UP

Star Fighter
Cesper**HAND-HELD GAME OF THE YEAR:**

Donkey Kong Land 2-Game Boy

RUNNER-UP

Tetris Attack-Game Boy
Sonic Blast-Game Gear**ADVENTURE GAME OF THE YEAR:**

Super Mario 64-Nintendo 64

RUNNER-UP

Resident Evil-PlayStation
Porkout Weapon-PlayStation**ARCADE GAME OF THE YEAR:**

Street Fighter Alpha 2

RUNNER-UP

Arag 51
X-Men Vs. Street Fighter**FIGHTING GAME OF THE YEAR:**

Tekken 2-PlayStation

RUNNER-UP

Mortal Kombat Trilogy
Multiplatform
Killer Instinct Gold-Nintendo 64**ROLE-PLAYING GAME OF THE YEAR:**

Super Mario RPG-Super NES

RUNNER-UP

Legacy of Kain-PlayStation
Beyond the Beyond-PlayStation**SIDE-SCROLLING GAME OF THE YEAR:**

Donkey Kong Country 3-Super NES

RUNNER-UP

Earthworm Jim 2-Multiplatform
Fedorismulani-PlayStation**STRATEGY GAME OF THE YEAR:**

SimCity 2000-Multiplatform

RUNNER-UP

Oregon Force-Saturn
Command & Conquer-Multiplatform**FLYING GAME OF THE YEAR:**

PilotWings 64-Nintendo 64

RUNNER-UP

Beyge: Beed 8-PlayStation
NIGHTS-Saturn**PUZZLE GAME OF THE YEAR:**

Tetris Attack-Super NES

RUNNER-UP

Best-A-Move 2-Multiplatform
Super Puzzle Fighter II-Multiplatform**ACTION GAME OF THE YEAR:**

Star Wars: Shadows

of the Empire-Nintendo 64

RUNNER-UP

Twisted Metal 2-PlayStation
Virtue Cop 2-Saturn**SPORTS GAME OF THE YEAR:**

Wave Race 64-Nintendo 64

RUNNER-UP

Madden NFL '97-Multiplatform
World Series Baseball II-Saturn**SHOOTER GAME OF THE YEAR:**

Firedream-PlayStation

RUNNER-UP

Alien Trilogy-Multiplatform
Virtue Cop 2-Saturn**SYSTEM OF THE YEAR:**

Nintendo 64

RUNNER-UP

PlayStation

BEST ORIGINAL CONCEPT:

Blast Chamber

Multiplatform

RUNNER-UP

Tecmo's Deception-PlayStation

COOLEST MASCOT:

Mork

RUNNER-UP

Crash Bandicoot

BEST GRAPHICS:

Super Mario 64-Nintendo 64

RUNNER-UP

NIGHTS-Saturn

BEST MUSIC:

Star Wars: Shadows

of the Empire-Nintendo 64

RUNNER-UP

WipeOut XL-PlayStation

BEST PERIPHERAL:

Interact's Game Shark

RUNNER-UP

NIGHTS Analog Controller

Here it is. The results of the tens of thousands of reader surveys that we've received. This is the first time that we had our readers vote on the best games of the year along with us. When we first published the surveys (in the December 1996 *EGM* and the 1997 *Video Game Buyer's Guide*), we didn't know what to expect. We received a few entries at first, but then they came in a flood. We were receiving literally hundreds of envelopes from all over the world, from Australia to Canada to Germany (we even got a vote from someone who works at *MTV Asia*). After spending days and days on counting these surveys, we decided that next year, we'll have to incorporate Scantrons into our Reader Survey (get your no. 2 pencils ready!).

Some of the votes did give us a few laughs. We saw plenty of humorous write-ins. Best Original Concept: sliced bread. Coolest Mascot: Lara Croft (we don't think *The Tomb Raider* heroine would appreciate being called a mascot).

Even funnier, the Nintendo 64 games Tetrisphere and Turok received hundreds of votes for Puzzle Game of the Year and Shooter Game of the Year, respectively. As of this writing, these games have yet to be released (they were supposed to have been released in 1996, but they were delayed after the survey had already been sent to print, so they ended up being disqualified). So if the public hasn't seen these games yet, why were they voting for them? It just goes to show how loyal Nintendo fans can be; they'll vote for NEA games that they haven't played yet!

Some of the other funnier moments included us getting a survey that voted for only Williams (who's now Midway) games. We suspect that this came from Midway since whoever filled it out created their own category: Best Compilation. The winner? Williams Arcade Classics, of course. Eidos Interactive also decided to get in on the mix. They sent us their survey, which picked only Eidos games. In an attempt to "help" us count these votes, Eidos included with their survey a copy of PlayStation's *Tomb Raider*. Nice try Eidos, but your vote only counts once!

So what you see here is the results of one of our largest surveys ever. Each winner is listed along with the runner-up. We also listed the most popular write-in votes for a few of the categories, in case you were interested.

ALL SYSTEMS

GAME OF THE YEAR

SUPER MARIO⁶⁴

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO SYSTEM: NINTENDO 64

It didn't take us long into counting the surveys before we figured out that Super Mario 64 was going to be your choice for the #1 Game of 1996. In the end, Super Mario 64 captured 43 percent of the votes for this category. Who can argue this game's greatness? It boasts some of the best graphics and gameplay ever.



RUNNER-UP

RESIDENT EVIL

PUBLISHER: CAPCOM SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

#1 WRITE-IN

TEKKEN 2

PUBLISHER: NAMCO SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION



INDEPENDENCE DAY

While it may seem a bit late in the coming, the runaway box-office hit of last summer, *Independence Day* (ID4) is finally coming to the video game screens. Thanks to Fox Interactive, fans of the movie can re-create the alien-blasting action on their Saturn and PlayStation systems.

Last month, *EGM* brought you a two-page look at an early version of the



PlayStation ID4. Now, we have nearly complete copies of both versions of the game, which shows many improvements.

The game still involves flying around in a variety of military planes, blasting the alien fighters and destroying the main ship before



it vaporizes the cities they are looting over.

Now, however, there is a bit more involved in what you need to do to emerge victorious. In each level, there are separate goals that need to be accomplished before you can take out the giant Destroyer. You may have to simply blow away a certain number of alien ships, take out various radar bases that the aliens have seized control of or protect an Earth ship from harm

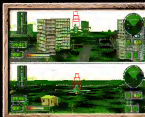
at the hands of the aliens.

Regardless of the mission, you'll have to complete it before your time limit for the level expires. This will prompt the aliens to prepare to launch their Destroyer's primary weapon. If you fail to launch a missile up the gun's port, or



if you take too long to complete your missions, the main gun will fire on the helpless city below. Anyone who has seen the movie knows that the chances of living through that are very slim indeed.

The action takes place in a wide variety of cities all over the world. These cities aren't all in the U.S. either. You will have the chance to fly abroad and fight in such cities as Tokyo and Paris. As in the movie, the final level is inside the alien Mothership, where you pilot a



captured alien fighter against the swarms.

At certain points in some levels, there are "warp gates" that the aliens have attached to the bottom of their Destroyer ships. Flying into these will take you to a bonus level where you can collect power-ups while dodging alien fire. The strange thing about the bonus levels is that they lock the familiar Destroyer ship that locks you in the city with its force field. Instead, the aliens have a remote force-field generator hovering over the city. This device looks like a giant mechanical spider floating in the air, and you'll

These two pictures show just how comparable the Saturn (left) and PlayStation (right) versions of ID4 are. Both versions of the game look almost identical, and more importantly, play exactly the same.

ALIENS INVADE YOUR HOME

The movie *Independence Day* was such a hit that a lot of people were looking for a way to relive the experience in their home. Now, thanks to modern technology, they can.

Like any good movie-to-video game translation, *Independence Day* (the game) wants to re-create the feel of the movie as well as offer something new. One of the major elements that makes you feel as if you're in the movie is the many different locations where you fend off the alien forces.

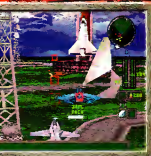
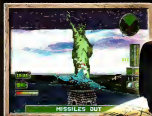
Such familiar locations as Washington, D.C. and the fabled Area 51 military base make an appearance in the game. Below, you can see



need to destroy it before you can escape from the bonus level.

Among the power-ups available are extra missiles, time extensions, health recovery and extra plane icons. These plane icons allow you to fly in the different types of aircrafts. Actually, this is how the game handles your "lives." To continue playing, you need to continue collecting different planes. Once you lose a fighter, you choose another from your acquired fleet to use until all of them are depleted.

As a special bonus, there is a hidden code that allows you to fly an alien fighter ship through any of the levels, not just the final one. As you can see in the picture next to the alien ship below, taking control of an enemy craft allows for your darker side to shine through



as you wreak havoc on the world.

Perhaps the best feature of *Independence Day* is that no matter what 32-bit system you own, the game will be just as good. Fox Interactive has programmed the game specifically for the Saturn and PlayStation instead of trying to port the game from one system to the other. This ensures that the



graphics and gameplay are excellent on both systems.

The *Independence Day* game is shaping up to be as much fun as the movie on which it is based. Its fast-paced action and alien-blasting combat will have would-be

Will Smiths playing until the sequel to *Independence Day* invades movie screens.



how Area 51 was shown in the movie, with the game's representation of it directly beneath. While the two may not look identical, the feel of alien forces attacking a top-secret installation remains intact.

Now that you can get *Independence Day* for your Saturn and PlayStation, remember that you can experience the original movie on videotape or laser disc. True fans of the movie will be interested to know that later in the year, Fox will be releasing a special-edition laser disc featuring many extras not available anywhere else.

Such special bonuses include a running commentary of the laser disc's second audio track, original movie trailers, deleted scenes and even an alternate ending to the film that was passed over for the ending that we have all seen. The movie will be presented in a letterboxed format and will also include the original motion picture soundtrack CD.

With both the video game and the movie available for you to use in your home, reliving the movie *Independence Day* is as easy as turning on your TV.





LAST-MINUTE UPDATE!

When one thinks of new arcade games, Japan is usually the first country that comes to mind. But all that is changing. Not only did Tekken 3 make its official world debut in Hong Kong (and EGM, of course, was there to get that scoop), but now Europe is starting to become a larger player in the arcade market. Their major arcade show took place on Jan. 21 and again EGM was there to get the first hands-on test of any new games.

ATEI

LONDON SHOW



Maximum Force—Atari Games' sequel to Area 51—made its world debut at the ATEI Show in London.



At the ATEI Show, there were two major world debuts. The first was Sega's new driving game—tentatively titled Scud Race. A better name would be Daytona 2 as that is what it really is. Utilizing the Model 3

board technology, Scud has no equal. The driving is fluid, fast and the polygons are virtually invisible.

Scud Race still features four different perspective views, three different tracks and multiplayer linking.

board technology, Scud has no equal. The driving is fluid, fast and the polygons are virtually invisible.

characters are now looking as smooth as those in V13 and almost all of the moves including the side step are in place. The sub-Bosses and Bosses are next to be inserted.



Scud Race is Sega's sequel to Daytona. Using Model 3 board technology, this is the new standard for racers.

The second major release was Atari Games' sequel to their shooter Area 51. Called Maximum Force, this gun game takes the genre to new levels. Not only are there over 30 minutes of continuous play for three missions, but Atari has built in repeatability by hiding 30 secret rooms in the game! This will be one game you won't want to miss.

Don't miss our exclusive update on page 80 of this issue. More next month!

Finally, Namco had a 66 percent complete version of Tekken 3. The



SCUD RACE



DOOM 64

Doom Never Looked So Doomed Good

Before gamers look at this title and pawn it off as another Doom remake, they should read through this article and take a look at the screen shots. Doom 64 isn't the same Doom that came to the PC so long ago—well at least not in sound, graphics or level design.

The story goes down like this: In Doom II the big, bad space Marine who gamers control destroyed everything that even had a hint of being demonic...or so he thought.

The problem was that one of the Archviles was still barely alive. Even though the demon didn't seem to have much of a chance of surviving with the many bullet holes in its gut, somehow the fiend lived.

The only enemy left, this particular Archvile, healed and slowly started resurrecting its

demon pals. Since the healing process wasn't quite finished, its resurrecting powers mutated the enemies when they came back from hell (hence the new look). Now it's time to get killing once again.

Some of the new features in Doom 64 include: completely new level design, new characters, revamped characters and a whole lot more. Overall, Doom 64 is quite incredible.

Gamers may be wondering if the screens they've seen from Doom 64 are actual game shots or just renders. EGM saw this title firsthand, and we're happy to say that the game actually looks as good as the screen shots.

This is no surprise considering Doom 64 uses all of the new features offered by the Nintendo 64 hardware (like antialiasing and 60/trilinear filtering). Remember to take a look at the backgrounds



For the revamped chaingun and watch the screen shake like never before.



Even with all of those brains, he won't be able to figure out how to keep alive.

while playing the game. Most are animated and add a whole new dimension to the game.

One of the new bad guys who shows up is the Nightmare Imp. This one is similar to the regular Imp. However, the Nightmare Imp shoots blue fireballs, is almost invisible and is more powerful—or at least "smarter." Gamers will find plenty of enemies in the 30+ levels in the game, each with their own motif.

With all of these new enemies, a hefty arsenal of weapons helps. All of the same weapons that appeared in Doom II have made the trip to Doom 64. There is at least one new weapon in Doom 64. We're unable to show this new weapon, though, since it wasn't quite done at press time.

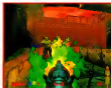
The N64 analog controller really comes in handy with a game like this. Since Doom 64 allows gamers to configure the controller how they want, figuring out what button does what is no problem.

All of the new features obviously couldn't have come together without a team of talented game makers behind them. There was a

"...with many bullet holes in its gut..."



The N64 is the perfect place to show off some cool transparency effects.



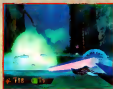
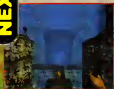
Doom 64 is one of the most intense—if not the most intense—version of Doom.

total of eight people working on this project at the Midway offices.

Doom 64 has everything that made the original Doom as popular as it was. It also has so much added that gamers won't be able to just say that "it's just another Doom clone." The game isn't final, but more than likely any fan of a good shooter will like Doom 64. ■

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
March	Hard	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Midway	75%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Action	1	96-Meg

N64



Turok: Dinosaur Hunter

The Lost World Of The Future

Accclaim's first crack at creating a Nintendo 64 game has finally made it to completion. Originally scheduled to be released at the system's launch back in September, Accclaim decided that they wanted quality instead of rushing a game out that was substandard. The result will be hitting the Nintendo 64 this month, quenching gamers' thirst for new 64-bit titles.

The game stars Turok, who has been sent back in time to stop the evil Campaigner from screwing up the future using an army of robotic and cretaceous dinosaurs and cyborgs. At the end of your quest, you'll go head-to-head with the Campaigner himself.

The first thing you'll want to do is get yourself familiar with Turok's control scheme. The game has a Training Mode that



Our spiky dinosaur pal here gets a taste of one of Turok's many weapons.

will teach you how to jump, climb and the other techniques that a lone warrior will need on his quest. After mastering the basics, the control becomes more intuitive to the player.

Turok's arsenal of weapons is both powerful and plentiful. No matter what kind of firepower you've seen in other first-person perspective action games, Turok has weapons that produce amazing graphical effects on the screen. There's even a weapon



The Skeleton-like ancient sentries come at you with guns and spears blazing.

that makes every enemy in view. The amount of detail that has gone into the design of each weapon is evident by the special effects each one produces.

Action is divided into eight levels, each one presenting a new challenge to overcome. Most of the levels take place in a jungle environment, with drums pounding away a very tribal beat to accompany your journey in the background, you'll even hear the monkeys that roam high above the

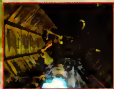


From high above, you can easily pick off enemies on the jungle floor.

jungle floor. The music changes with your surroundings. Plunge into the water and the music becomes a very mellow, soft tune. The game's music and sound effects take advantage of the capability of the Nintendo 64's music processor. The screams, grunts and groans that your enemies let loose are both loud and realistic.

The enemies Turok faces throughout the levels are not just made up of dinosaurs. You'll run

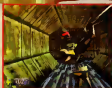
"...eight levels, each one presenting a new challenge to overcome."



RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
March	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Accclaim	90%	
THEME	PL-AYERS	SIZE
Action	1	64-Meg



T-Rex runs after you breathing fire and shooting lasers at poor Turok.



The last level of Turok is full of robot and cyborg enemies from the future.



After a short time, the enemies regenerate to attack you again.



Bonus levels are accessible through blue portals that appear intermittently.



When equipped with Yek Arrows, the bow can be quite a powerful weapon.



The larger enemies sometimes attack the smaller dinosaurs within the level.



The most impressive part of Turok is when you're swimming. The control of the game may have a high learning curve, but when in the water, it becomes a lot easier to maneuver with.

Four Boss characters await you during the game. Spread throughout the levels are Longhunter, Mantis, T-Rex and the final Boss, the Campaigner himself. All of the Bosses move very fast, and when close up, take up almost the full size of the screen.

When killed, most of the enemies have random death sequences. Some keel over immediately, while others moan in pain squaring blood before hitting the ground and disappearing.

Unless you plan on leaving your N64 on for the time it takes you to work through the game, you'll want to make sure you have a memory cart on hand to save



Hiding behind rocks to fire at a group of raptors will keep Turok alive.



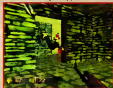
your games. Turok does not have internal RAM to store game saves. Future games will probably require the use of the memory cart when saving games, so investing in one is a good idea.

Gamers will have to judge whether the labor of Acclaim and Iguania has produced a quality Nintendo 64 title. Having been the first third-party title announced for the system, gamers have waited to play it. Look for the Review Crew's critique of Turok Dinosaur Hunter in this issue. ■

Gamer's EDGE

Cretaceous Bosses

In Turok, you'll find yourself up against some of the biggest and meanest Bosses this side of the Nintendo 64. Those that await you are Longhunter, Mantis, T-Rex and the big Boss himself, the Campaigner. During the battles, you'll see a handy Boss life meter appear at the top of the screen during their grand entrance. Using the many weapons that Turok has at his disposal, your job is to rid the world of the Campaigner and his minions once and for all. Because if you fail, all of time as we know it will be destroyed.



SATURN



Norse by Norsewest: THE RETURN OF THE LOST VIKINGS

Passing Gas Has Never Been This Much Fun

The history of Vikings goes way back to ancient times. Times when 16-bit systems just came out and gamers were still amazed by side-scrollers with 256 colors. Yes, it was that long ago.

That was also when *Lost Vikings* originally was released. Most gamers should remember this one from the Super NES and Genesis. Now the strategy/puzzle game has set a course for the Sega Saturn.

Unlike some games that make the voyage to 32-bit systems and get lost, *Norse by Norsewest: The Return of the Lost Vikings* is headed in the right direction—it hasn't lost anything from the original game. It has only gained better graphics, animated cinemas, full voice and a fitting soundtrack.

For those gamers who aren't familiar with the game, here's a quick rundown: The idea is to get each of the three Vikings to an exit point in each level.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
March	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Interplay	100%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Strategy	1 or 2	CD-ROM



When controlling Scorch, the dragon, make sure the enemies are well-done.

Like Lemmings, each of the three Vikings has special abilities. In some levels one of the Vikings may have to jump over a barrier since the other two can't. Likewise, one of the Vikings can smash barriers while the other two can't.

Some of the abilities of the Vikings are a little strange...maybe even gross. One Viking in particular has the ability to propel himself upward by his own gas. Hope he's not carrying a torch!

In *Norse by Norsewest*, the idea is to get the two or three Vikings (and sometimes a werewolf or dragon) to a point that will warp them to the next level.

There are over 30 levels that gamers will play through. The levels have their own styles, such as a pirate ship or inside caverns.

While gamers make their way through the various levels, they'll come in contact with a whole cast



Egad! It's the final Boss! Is it time to show him what pain really means?

of characters, each with his or her own unique voice. Most of them have their own attitude problems as well.

The levels in the game are filled with tricks, traps and enemies that will test a gamer's skill.

Some traps are as simple as spikes at the bottom of a pit while others are more complex like fireballs shooting from both sides.

The enemies in this version of *Lost Vikings* are scary in general. Skeletons and vampires frequent many of the levels, among other denizens. ■



Gamer's EDGE

Norse by Norsewest features more than just the three Vikings. There are three other characters who join the helmet wearers in their various exploits. Here's a rundown of the characters in the game:

Erik the Swift: He's the jumper and basher of walls. He doesn't have any weapons to destroy enemies with, but is the smart one of the bunch.

Baleog the Fierce: He has a bionic arm and can grab items that are usually unreachable. Use his saber to destroy bad guys as well.

Olof the Swift: Olof isn't too bright. He has a nasty problem with gas, but it ends up helping out in some levels. Also his shrinking ability is invaluable.

Fang the Werewolf: He can grapple onto walls and climb up them. Also, he can kill enemies with his vicious claws.

Scorch the Dragon: Scorch can fly for a short time and can glide in the air to avoid spikes. His fireballs are perfect against enemies and hard-to-reach switches.

"...Norse by Norsewest is headed in the right direction..."



SATURN

FIGHTERS MEGAMIX

A Battle Of Epic Proportions

Gamers everywhere have wondered for years: What if all the companies that produce fighting games collaborated to make one huge game starring all of their characters? That would be a huge cross-licensing deal that probably would never happen. Thankfully, Sega has put together *Fighters Megamix*, a collection of characters from two of their best fighters, *Fighting Vipers* and *Virtua Fighter*.

What results is a game which plays somewhat faster than the average game of *Vipers* or *VF*. This game is loaded with secrets, hidden characters (from other Sega games) and special options.

Gameplay is fast, with responsive control and plenty of combos, juggles and special moves.

Additionally, the top X, Y and Z buttons are used as different combinations of A, B and C, so special



moves and throws are at the touch of a button. The VF cast has moves directly from *VF3*, and if you haven't gotten to play that installment of the series yet, there's a handy Training Mode to get you used to the controls.

Fighters Megamix has five modes of play. One-player Mode pits you against nine "tracks" of fighters with six or seven opponents each. The tracks are grouped by characters. In the *Virtua Fighter* track, you fight only characters from *Virtua Fighter*.

your life bar is drained to zero (it doesn't refill after each round). Vs. Mode is just as you would expect: a two-player fight to the finish.

The Team Battle Mode lets you hand pick a team of eight characters to duke it out versus the computer or a second player. Finally, Training Mode sets you against a dummy character (who looks right out of the multiplatform game *Balz*) to practice your techniques. You are given a list of the moves for each character,

except the secret characters.

Two different arenas can be chosen for the game. *Fighting Vipers*-style play puts you inside four walls. The *Virtua Fighter* Mode gives you an infinite amount of space to battle in, with none of the ring-outs of previous games.

Stay tuned for a review of Sega's Saturn fighting collection in an upcoming *EGM* ■

Gamer's EDGE

Just when you thought you had beaten *Fighters Megamix*, you find there are a ton of hidden surprises in store. At least 10 characters are hidden in the game. Get records on Survival Mode, and even more appear. Check out just a few of the hidden fighters that await you!

"This game is loaded with secrets..."

If you choose the *Fighting Vipers* track, you fight only *FV* characters. There are tracks with only Bosses, only secret characters, and one full of dirty fighters, who use cheap moves and combos to finish you off.

Survival Mode has your character fighting against the full range of *Megamix* fighters for varied amounts of time. The goal is to see how many characters you can defeat before time runs out, or



Training Mode lets you hone your skills with each fighter.



Just look at the plethora of Sega's characters in *Megamix*.

PLAYSTATION



CRYPT KILLER

Demons, Spiders And Heads—Oh My!

The PlayStation's arsenal of light-gun games is about to grow one title larger, thanks to Konami and its soon-to-be-released shooter Crypt Killer. But this arcade port relies on more than its mere newness to stand out from Die Hard Inlogy, Area 51, Horned Owl and other PlayStation light-gun fare. Crypt Killer is, well, a different kind of shooter. Put more bluntly, this game is downright weird.

You don't battle gun-toting punks, soldiers or even aliens in Crypt Killer. Instead, you face off against armies of skeletons, demons, giant spiders, dragons and even the spitting merman that fell under the whip of Simon Belmont in the Castlevania games. But even though Crypt Killer's levels are set in less-than-modern locales (unless your next-door neighbor lives in a castle), the game arms you with some very modern weapons, including a shotgun, scatter gun, chaingun and grenade launcher. Oh, and a floating head pops up every now



and then to help guide you through the game (definitely Crypt Killer's most oddball feature).

But weirdness in video games is often a virtue, and Crypt Killer packs enough unique gameplay twists to make it a satisfying blast-a-thon. For starters, your path through the game can be different each time you play. Crypt Killer offers six levels to choose from when you first start a game, and, as you play through each level, you occasionally walk up to two locked doors. At these points,

the friendly floating head materializes and asks you to choose which door you'll pass through.

Beyond just taking you to new locales, these doors will also determine which ending you'll see when you finally complete the game. Depending on your choices, you'll either wind up with a way-cool treasure or face a nasty death. These branching paths ensure that players will rarely battle through the same locations in consecutive Crypt Killer play sessions. The different endings also pump up the game's replay value.

Your character in Crypt Killer is much more active—and, in some

cases, more acrobatic—than the heroes of other first-person shooters. Although he usually walks through the game's polygon castles, caves and forests, he sometimes leaps and somersaults to dodge enemies (you don't control these actions—he jumps at predetermined points in each level). Your view of the action rolls and buckles accordingly. Sometimes your character even leaps off ledges, leaving you to battle bats and other monsters while in freefall. Players prone to motion sickness may find themselves looking away when things turn particularly topsy-turvy.

Konami is thinking about packing its light gun, the Justifier, with Crypt Killer, thus giving gamers extra incentive to buy the shooter. But as of yet Konami hasn't come to a decision. Still, whether it comes with the gun or not, Crypt Killer will appeal to gamers keen on shooting something besides regular old bad guys for a change. ■

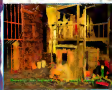


He's creepy and weird, but the floating head is a swell guide.



Recognize these guys? Past Konami villains guest star!

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY
March	Adjustable
PUBLISHER	3,000
Konami	80%
THEME	PLAYERS
Shooting 1	CD-ROM



RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
Now	Hard	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Psychonosis	90%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Adventure	1	CD-ROM



NEXT WAVE



Etienne, make yourself scarce. Kid or you're going straight in the cellar.

City of Lost Children

Miette Wants To Find "Little Brother"

Some people may wonder how to describe City of Lost Children to others (especially those who haven't seen the French film).

Imagine Alone in the Dark in a huge rendered cityscape without the lighting. The 3-D adventure title from Psychonosis puts gamers in control of Miette, a little French orphan who gets caught up in a strange story line—one that involves orieged men and kidnapped children. The game features a load of

Some characters include: The Watchman who will throw Miette into the warehouse and lock it if she's not careful. The Cyclopes, whose ears are extremely sensitive, have poor eyesight. The Simese twin sisters who run the orphanage.

Players should beware of the cellar—to the orphans it's like a prison. The Simese twins will threaten Miette with the cellar many times. Since Miette is crafty, threats of the cellar do not scare her—she'll always succeed in her schemes.



that gamers can manually change the camera angle by simply hitting a button when the option appears at the top of the screen. All of the characters in the

Gamer's EDGE

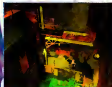
City of Lost Children is more than just a game. The movie, French-made, is about a city where children are being mysteriously kidnapped. Since the main character, Miette, is a kid, the whole kidnapping thing hits pretty close to home. At first, Miette doesn't care much, but when she meets "One" and finds that his "little brother" has been kidnapped, slowly her attitude changes. From that point, the story line gets pretty weird. The movie, like the game, features a huge cast of strange characters. The city in the movie, which is the same way in the game, is dark and dirty. The movie also features some great computer-generated effects (like the fleas and green smog). EGM suggests renting or buying the sub-titled version if the story sounds interesting. It beats the dubbed version by leaps and bounds. City of Lost Children is a great movie, even with its strangeness.

"...beware of the cellar...to the orphans it's like a prison."

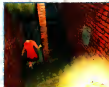
different areas to explore. Like the movie, the dark, futuristic feel of the city lends itself to this type of gameplay. The number of different buildings, rooms and alleyways to search is matched by the number of characters and creatures Miette can come in contact with or avoid.

Players will have to travel through the main area—which is the city and its nooks and crannies—and then through other areas outside of the city. With its dark theme and intricate mazes, CoLC is no children's title. CoLC features changing camera views much like Alone in the Dark. The main difference here is

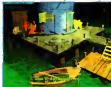
game, whether human or beast, have been rotoscoped with the motion-capture that has been so popular and so vital to realism these days. All of the renderers in the game are completely original—the graphics are incredible with real-time lighting for the characters and objects. ■



The sliding door above is a good way out of the warehouse.

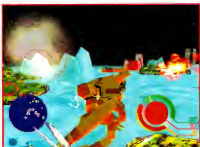


CoLC has some incredible rendered animation and stills.



Turn off the lighthouse so the watchman will leave his post.

PLAYSTATION

Gamer's
EDGE

So just how complex is Carnage Heart? Well, while the game is just one CD, it will be shipping with two. That second CD is a tutorial on how to play the game. Just throw in the Carnage Heart: Mission Briefing disc, and you'll be treated to multiple movies showing you how to build your mechs and send them out into battle. This disc is rather helpful due to the incredibly deep game play. Watching the game being played makes it much easier to understand than by just reading the manual. So before you jump into the game, be sure to watch and learn.

Carnage
HEART

Towering, Mechanized Strategy

As of late, there seems to be a growing interest in mech games. Between *Krazy Ivan*, *MechWarrior 2* and *Virtual On*, it appears that the concept of controlling a giant, armored battle suit is gaining some popularity on this side of the ocean.

While most of the mech games we have seen so far have been action-oriented, it was only a matter of time before we saw a mech strategy game here in the States. Sony has taken it upon themselves to fill this strategic void with their latest game, *Carnage Heart*.

Carnage Heart's plot is far too detailed to even think about explaining here, but basically you control an army of mechanized battle units in an effort to win a war on Jupiter's moons.

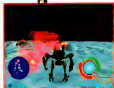
Like most strategy games, the



emphasis is not on fast action, but on carefully organizing your troops and making sure they are properly prepared for the battles, which are computer-controlled. It is the planning stages where you can see just how much depth is in *Carnage Heart*.

Before you even begin to move your troops, you have to design them. You must build your mech by selecting the various parts of the mech such as the armor and weapons.

Once you have the mech built,



you will need to design the mech's AI software. The Software Design Screen is a big grid where you place different commands in a type of flow chart to tell the mech what to do in different circumstances. For example, if your mech detects incoming fire, you can program it to automatically dodge it, if it is in range of the enemy, you can then have it retaliate.

If you don't want to bother building the mech, use the game's default mechs and software. After you finish designing everything,

you can test out the mech to make sure that it will operate smoothly during battle.

When everything is tested and ready to go, the game becomes a turn-based battle for supremacy with the fighting occurring in a 3-D environment.

While you don't actually control the movement of your army during the battles, you can select which of the mechs you want to view the action of as well as control the camera movement around the battlefield.

Carnage Heart is easily the most complex and involved of the mech games we have seen so far. While it may not appeal to all gamers, hardcore strategy fans should feel right at home. ■

"...strategy fans should feel right at home."



Building the mech's AI is tough, but the results may be worth it.



Before fighting, try the Test Mode to check your mech's AI.



Check out what you've armed your mech with at this screen.



RELEASE DATE DIFFICULTY

Now Hard

PUBLISHER % DONE

SCEA 100%

THEME PLAYERS SIZE

Strategy 1 CD-ROM

PLAYSTATION

NEXT WAVE



VANDAL HEARTS

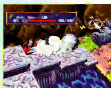
Konami Makes American Graffiti

Konami's recent release of Suikoden into the U.S. market marked the end of their absence in bringing quality Japanese titles to stateside audiences. Vandal Hearts continues that trend, bringing U.S. gamers one of Konami's recent Japanese hits.

Vandal Hearts is a strategy RPG set in 3-D landscapes. The game itself takes place mostly on the battlefield, and the story line follows the exploits of Ash Lambert and his comrades Diego



Battles use a turn-based system, each player moving all of his or her characters and attacking before the computer's turn. Being turn-based, the action is at a



game a lot more linear than your average RPG. Konami's storytelling is in top form with Vandal Hearts. The plot has so many twists and turns, it will

The game is still being translated for the U.S. market. When the game is closer to its release, EGM will bring you more info on what could shape up to be one of the only strategy RPGs the PlayStation sees in U.S. stores this year. Let's hope that this marks a trend of Konami translating their hot Japanese titles. ■

"Konami's storytelling is in top form with Vandal Hearts."

Renault and Clint Picard.

The graphics in Vandal Hearts are made up of 3-D landscapes, with 2-D sprite-based characters. During your turn in battle, the perspective can be manipulated using the L and R buttons to give you the best possible viewpoint. Battles occur not only on flat land, but also hills, pyramids and ships.

somewhat slower pace than other RPGs. Not that that the game is slow—far from it. There is no lag-time in the well-paced battles.

Since battles take up so much of the game, you are left to a menu-driven interface for talking to people or traveling from building to building when in a town. This cuts down on exploration, and makes the

keep you on your toes. Just remember to watch your back!

Stereo sound complements the gameplay. Vandal Hearts has some of the clearest sound and music; this game has ever heard, using yellow book audio, or music that is streamed in directly off of the CD. The music is finely composed to accentuate the battle sequences for both the enemies and allies.



During battle, use herbs and magic to replenish your energy.



In towns, talking to other people is done via a menu system.

Gamer's EDGE



BIDDY FOOTSTEPS

What's an action/strategy role-playing game without a little blood, eh? Vandal Hearts has blood and plenty of it.

The generous sprays of hemoglobin emerge when you deliver the final finishing blow to an opponent, unless they're made of rock or some other substance. Let's not let the censors get this one—Vandal Hearts uses it in a much more realistic way than say, Mortal Kombat.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
March	Easy	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Konami	80%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Strat/RPG	1	CD-ROM



Virgin Interactive may not be a name synonymous with sports titles as they only have NHL Powerplay '96 in their newly founded sports division. However, they hope to repeat their first title's success and perhaps forge some new ground in the process with their newest offering, Grand Slam Baseball.

At a glance Grand Slam doesn't look that much different than all the other baseball games on the market. Looking deeper, it becomes clear that several unique features separate this one from the 32-Bit baseball pack. To better understand these new and innovative features, Virgin took Team EGM behind the scenes for an in-depth look at the making of this interesting baseball simulation in progress.

Immediately evident from seeing the game, much time and care was taken by the development crew at Burst (the creators of the game) to create the most realistic on-screen players possible. To accomplish this, motion-capture technology was used to record all the movements of the players in a tedious process. The method involved human models executing specific movements until they were perfectly aligned and could be recorded for the final take. The actual process was done at a

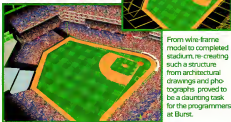


Using minor league players as models for the motion capture helped in creating realistic players. Good way for them boys to make some extra money.

gigantic, vacant air force hanger just outside the San Francisco Bay area. Plenty of space was needed for camera crews to maneuver around in trucks, following the live models to get the perfect angle and distance for the shot. For the project, six different minor league baseball players were videotaped performing all the vital moves used in the game. The video taping was intense but only took about a week to complete. Once that process was finished a couple of

months were spent digitizing and importing the images of the athletes into the computer and painstakingly placing them in the game.

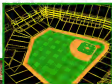
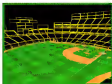
Just as challenging as the video capture process was the stadium rendering. The graphic artists at Burst used loads of pictures, aerial photographs and architectural drawings of the actual stadiums as a reference for the modeling. The rendering was done on powerful PCs using a 3-D modeling program called 3D Studio. Complex wire-frame models were computer generated to exact specifications and then filled in and shaded to match the real stadiums as closely as possible. In all, the game boasts 26 actual stadiums, all of which are very close to the originals not only in appearance but in scale accuracy as well.



From wire-frame model to completed stadium, re-creating such a structure from architectural drawings and photographs proved to be a daunting task for the programmers at Burst.

With the graphical realism portion of

the game taken care of, programmers were then faced with the challenge of making the gameplay and on-field action as entertaining and original as possible. To answer that challenge, the creative forces at Burst implemented an



An interview with Jesse Taylor, Executive Producer of Grand Slam



Programmers took care to re-create each park down to the inch. Notice the level of detail given to extraneous space like the rooftops and hills in the background.

innovative power meter used for both pitching and batting.

With the arcade-like meter situated on screen, players can control the power and timing of their swing as well as the aim of the bat. On the mound players control power and the type of pitch as well. According to Executive Producer Jesse Taylor, the designers at Bunt wanted players to have unprecedented control over the batter and pitcher and felt the power meter (modeled after a golf game's swing meter) would be the way to accomplish this.

Grand Slam Baseball also attempts to re-create the little things in the game that make it feel like an accurate simulation. For a humorous example, when a game becomes a blowout, bored fans progressively trickle from the stands.

Attention to detail such as this and great gameplay is what Virgin hopes will propel this game to the top. Baseball fans stayed tuned as we hope to have a review of this game in our April issue.



Team EGM's always diligent probe for the latest and best information on the sports games that matter takes us to earthquake-laden San Francisco to talk with Grand Slam's Executive Producer Jesse Taylor.

How is Grand Slam going to be unique compared to the rest of the baseball games on the market?

The core play mechanics are going to provide a greater depth of control



Notice the innovative power meter used to regulate the power behind the swing.

mostly due to the innovative power meter. Also in the game's favor is the exacting attention to detail in the stadiums, fields and player statistics. There are more stat options available in this game than any other baseball game on the market.

What are three things that make this title unique?

The three things that



When pitching, the power gauge is in the right-hand corner and appears similar to a golf game's swing meter.



With 868 actual major league players and their stats, stats, lineups should be quite hefty.

make Grand Slam unique are the power control, which adds an advanced novel play factor to the game, the strong artificial intelligence and the thorough attention to detail throughout the game.

Does the game cater to the action or simulation crowd or both?

The game will cater to both the action crowd and the simulation crowd. The action fans will enjoy the power meter aspect along with all the other moves



A back view of the action as the right fielder reacts to a high cup-6.

and tactics available to them. Also a plus for the action player—on the easiest setting, players will only have to swing at the right moment while on the harder levels, players will be controlling swing, power and direction, making gameplay much more interactive. We think simulation fans will be quite satisfied with the level of detail placed in the game. There are 868 actual major league players in the game. In addition,

player stats are updated as the season goes along. Also remarkable is the game's artificial intelligence which is astute enough to reject bogus trade attempts or unreasonable maneuvers in general.

Why no MLB team logo license?

We didn't feel the MLB license to obtain the actual team logos was necessary as long as all the real players were in the game already.



For the first few pitches, on-screen instructions tell players how to use the power meter.

What was the hardest part about programming Grand Slam?

The hardest aspect of creating and programming this game was getting the artificial intelligence to be as advanced as possible. Most important was making sure the players did all the right things in different situations. No dumb actions would be acceptable.

Is there anything you wish you could have put into the game?

There is nothing that we would want to add to the game...we feel it is very solid at this time.

SPORTS

Thunder
Truck Rally

Psygnosis' rough racing game rumbles and tumbles onto the PlayStation

Judging from all of the new off-road racing games on the horizon, it seems that game companies have decided that it just isn't cool to race on pavement anymore. If you're the type of person who likes to enjoy a good tractor pull or two, then Psygnosis is developing just the racing game for you.

Thunder Truck Rally is a cross between Destruction Derby and an off-road racing game. Instead of racing sleek, small, wimpy racing cars, your

vehicles of choice are juiced up 4X4 vehicles. These vehicles are far from the norm, however. There are nine different vehicles to race and crush things with. They range from huge, monstrous trucks, to smaller cars that resemble *Herbie*, the *Love Bug* on steroids. Each comes equipped with monstrous-sized wheels that are roughly three times



Crushing cars into pulp to win points is how you win in the action-packed Car Crushing Mode.

the vehicle's body size, and for good reason.

Thunder Truck offers a large selection of tracks; you'll find yourself racing through dense forests, deserts or even in and around a simmering volcano. As this race is an off-road one, you may stray from the beaten path, and go virtually wherever you would like, essentially creating your own path. However, in the Circuit Racing Mode you can't get too wreckless if you want to win the race. There are checkpoints and flags that you must collect on your way to the finish line that keep you somewhat on course, but besides that, you're free to roam about.

There are a multitude of obstacles aside from your competitors. Things such as rocks, trees, molten lava and houses can block your path, but generally not for very long. There is, however, a damage meter for your vehicle that keeps you honest.

Thankfully, there is also Car Crushing Mode for all of us that know what to really do

with big, bruising trucks—crush things. In this mode cars are lined up in rows, and opposing players get style points for how well they mash the vehicles into rubble.

As far as off-road racing games go, this one could be a successful blend of racing and mayhem in the same blueprint as Destruction Derby.



The huge, 3-D vehicles move briskly and are very detailed and realistic.



You want obstacles? Well, this game has them as you can see by this shot of an unsuspecting town that is about to experience off-road racing.



Nine different characters are available that have their own strengths and weaknesses.

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
March	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Psygnosis	75%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Racing	1	CD-ROM

All-Star Baseball '97

Featuring Frank Thomas

Acclaim begins work on their next heir to the "Big Hurt" throne of baseball games

It seems that you can bet on Acclaim releasing a new Frank Thomas baseball game every year, just as assuredly as you can count on a new Madden or GameDay.

Right off the bat, it appears that Acclaim's new baseball game will make large strides in the graphics over the previous versions. To complement the graphics, it looks like All-Star Baseball '97 Featuring Frank Thomas will have plenty of

options that will keep both arcade and baseball simulation fans content.

For starters, the accurate 1997 schedule that includes the first taste of interleague play will be implemented. While playing a league game, full statistical tracking will be included, which is, of course, very important for a baseball game. To be as accurate as possible, the statistics from the 1996 season will be provided straight from STATS Inc. and



the player ratings will be formulated from those statistics. In addition to season play, there is the obligatory Exhibition Mode, the All-Star game, batting practice, playoffs and home-run derby available from the Selection Menu.

Always a staple of Frank Thomas games is the player animation captured from the big man himself. By using



this motion capture, Acclaim promises fluid batter and pitching control.

With great graphics and a large list of features, Acclaim hopes to make this the best Frank Thomas game ever.



Acclaim's All-Star Baseball '97 Featuring Frank Thomas promises plenty of great visuals, but the true test will be making the gameplay just as good.



RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
April	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Acclaim	N/A	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Baseball	1 or 2	CD-ROM

PLAYSTATION

WCW vs. THE WORLD

T*HQ hopes their new PlayStation game will put a stranglehold on wrestling fans

There haven't been too many wrestling games on the PlayStation, or any 32-Bit console for that matter. So far, the best wrestling games have been those brought over from Japan with some minor gameplay tweaks and other graphical changes.

WCW vs. the World is no different. Originally a Japanese game, T*HQ promises to bring the game to the U.S. with a more localized flavor—namely nine different WCW wrestlers including Hulk Hogan, Ric Flair, Lex Luger and Scott Steiner. Each wrestler will also have his



As you can see there is plenty of fast-paced, high-flying action in this wrestling game (left). There are a variety of pinning moves you can use to put your opponent into submission, thus slowing you to win the match (below)



RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
March	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
T*HQ	80%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Wrestling	1 or 2	CD-ROM

own special "signature" move. In addition to these well-known names in wrestling, 43 other wrestlers will be available originating from different countries and Federations. The Federations will include the WCW and six other wrestling federations from different parts of the world.

The graphics in the game look pretty good so far. The 3-D rendered wrestlers are well detailed and move fluently. Once the new WCW wrestlers are added, T*HQ promises that they will also look just like their real life counterparts and brawl like them too. Moves



such as body slams, pile drivers, sleeper holds and reversals are only a small sample of their repertoire.

With all of these features and some great complimentary graphics, T*HQ hopes that they will have the most realistic wrestling simulation yet.

Rage Racer

Namco's long-awaited sequel is raging along the right track

Namco has finally released *Rage Racer* in Japan, which many feel (including us) is the first worthy sequel to *Ridge Racer*. Unlike *Ridge Racer Revolution*, *Rage Racer* has been completely programmed from scratch, and the end result may be one of the best racing games to hit the PlayStation.

Rage Racer allows you to race with 13 different cars, and that isn't even mentioning any of the hidden vehicles that are available when you finish the game. If you don't like the way your car looks, *Rage* offers a very unique vehicle editor which allows you to change the body and trim colors of the car in addition to the logo displayed on its hood. You can select from several premade logos or actually design one yourself in a rudimentary



One of the biggest improvements in *Rage Racer* are all of the new options such as car selection and editing.

painting program. (Needless to say, some of the ones we drew up are simply unfit for printing.) As you win races and earn more money, you can use your winnings to upgrade your car (improving its handling, max speed, grip or acceleration), or simply buying a new vehicle altogether.

Although there are only two completely separate tracks consisting of a "main" track and an oval (available at later classes), there are actually quite a few different racing circuits. Through a very well-designed track, three different paths are intertwined within the main track, therein creating three different courses. Once you achieve first place in each track, you finish that "class" of tracks, and move on to the next. There are five in all. Each class offers new cars and a greater difficulty level. Once you finish all of the track



A variety of tracks that can be raced forward or backward keeps *Rage* fresh (top).

RELEASE DATE	DIFFICULTY	
April	Moderate	
PUBLISHER	% DONE	
Namco	80%	
THEME	PLAYERS	SIZE
Racing	1	CD-ROM



classes, a secret sixth class opens up.

The courses are well-detailed, sporting spectacular waterfalls, long bridges and the obligatory dark tunnels bathed in yellow light in the true *Ridge Racer* trademarked style. There are plenty of rolling hills, tough turns and colorful scenery to make any racing enthusiast's eyes glaze over while screaming through the tracks. While racing these courses, Namco has added a nice touch by having the time of day slowly change as you progress through the race. When you start a race the weather may be bright and sunny, but as you near the finish line, the sky could change to a cloudy atmosphere.

The racing physics are very



Two different views can be used in *Rage Racer*—a first-person and third-person camera (top). After winning a race, your best lap is displayed in the third-person camera (left).

PLAYSTATION

similar to the other *Ridge Racer* offerings. The name of the game is precision, and the ability to execute a picture-perfect powerslide at will. When you run into things, you don't wreck, you simply lose speed and slightly ricochet, according to your speed.

Right now it doesn't appear that any sort of Two-player Mode will be available through a link cable or otherwise, but this is so promising a game, it may not matter.

With great aesthetics and the same gameplay that made the original *Ridge Racer* so popular, *Rage Racer* looks to be a sure-fire hit.





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EGM will award a prize to the writer of the best letter of each month. Please note: The above two addresses are for editorial correspondence only! Direct any subscription inquiries to:

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Note: *EGM* cannot and will not personally respond to any letters. We reserve the right to edit all correspondence for space and grammar purposes.

16-BIT ROYALTIES NOT WORTH IT

Dear *EGM*,

In the December issue, your 16-Bit special feature stated that a poor-selling 16-Bit game would still produce plenty of income because of the existing high installed base of 16-Bit systems. If this was the case, why aren't we seeing more 16-Bit titles than we are? Sure consumers are demanding 32-Bit plus titles, but why not take advantage of the great number of people who are still holding on to their 16-Bit systems?

Howard Clarke
Livonia, MI

We said that a relatively poor-selling title will still make money. For example, a game bought by 1 percent of a 20 million Super NES population will outsell a game bought by 16 percent of a 1 million N64 population by 2-10-1. Although a few 16-Bit games are still coming out, most developers have moved on. The reason why is that it would be detrimental to a game creator's career to stay behind in an aging 16-Bit business while his or her professional peers go on to the next generation of programming. As anyone working in a technical-oriented industry would say, you have to stay on top of new technologies in order to keep your worth in the tough job market. Eventually, the 16-Bit market will die out completely, and if you aren't ready to evolve, then you're up the creek without a paddle (not to mention, without a job).

THE PSYCHO VOTE

Dear *EGM*,

Please bring back "Psycho Letter of the Month," and I won't have to hurt Archie anymore.

B.J. Tyson
Henderson, TN

Thanks for the burnt foam Archie face, Mr. Tyson. But please refrain from sending us any more stuff in the future, OK?



Dear *EGM*,

Please do not bring back Psycho Letter of the Month. Those letters are usually composed of nothing but space-wasting drivel and are devoid of any real amusement. Please use the space for more video game coverage, or better yet, good letters.
Phil Albrecht
Erie, PA

And the battle continues...

PLAYSTATION SEQUELS

Dear *EGM*,

Does Naughty Dog have any intention on releasing a sequel to Crash Bandicoot for the PlayStation? Also, when will Resident Evil 2 be released?

Johann Sulaiman
johann_s@pacific.net.sg

Sony hints that Crash Bandicoot 2 may appear around the fourth quarter of 1997. Capcom is planning on releasing Resident Evil 2 in the U.S. during the second half of this year.

PORN AGAIN

Dear *EGM*,

Hi! My name is Matt Dotter. I'm 12 years old, and I have a question about the N64 and the pornography for the system (which I read about in the December '96 issue, page 338). I was wondering what games will have the porn. Can you e-mail me the answer?

Matt Dotter
dotters@mail.cadvision.com

Boy, are you going to be in trouble when your parents read your letter. You've just demonstrated just how dangerous sarcasm can be. We were clearly joking when we said the N64 would have porn on it!

DO GOOD THINGS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES

Dear *EGM*,

What's up with the newer Sony game boxes? They are just CD jewel cases! Now

my collection of games will look extremely stupid because I'll have a bunch of big game boxes and a bunch of little game boxes. This may sound pathetic, but unless Sony gets the big game cases back, I may quit buying Sony games.

Shane Andreasen
Glenwood, MN

Yes it is a little pathetic. Sure your collection may be a little mismatched, but isn't it

TOP 5 Games That Look Good...But Aren't

5 Loaded
Multiplatform

4 DragonHeart
Multiplatform

3 Rise of the Robots
Multiplatform

2 Skeleton Warriors
Multiplatform



1 Myst
Multiplatform

(Dis)honorable Mentions: Crazy Ivan, Rabal Assault II, Destruction Derby, Night Trap, Alone in the Dark, Dragon's Lair

Letter of the MONTH

TICKED OFF

Dear EGM,

I would like to comment on both Mr. Windham's and Mr. Acosta's letters [January issue, #90]. First, Mr. Windham, you say that you can't buy a game based on EGM's reviews. Well, believe it or not, unless a game is one of the few that has universal appeal (Mario, Street Fighter, John Madden), a good review is hardly an indication as to whether or not you yourself will like it, nor is a bad review saying you'll hate it. "Rent it first" is a far better indication and is something that the RC suggests you do. Now for Mr. Acosta, who quite frankly (ticked) me off. He says that the idea of a gaming publication is "ridiculous." Well, maybe the idea of *The Wall Street Journal* for investors is dumb too. Or maybe reading *Newsweek* is a big waste of time for those politically inclined. Bottom line, if I could trek all over the world going to trade shows and talking to executives to get my video game info, then yes, EGM would be unimportant. But since I (and most gamers) don't have that option, we look to someone else to do our investigation for us. That someone is EGM. You make the assumption that game players are obsessed kids who have no lives. I love games, and I've played them for 15 years now, but gaming is a hobby no different from card collecting, or comics, or stamps or anything else. As for being a kid? I'm a 19-year-old full-time college student, who also works full time, loves skiing and drawing, and has a girlfriend of two years. Hardly the life of a child, or someone who needs to "get outside once in a while." And yes, the world can be a very cool place, but it has also

been known to throw a couple of curve balls, which is why video games and EGM will always be whom I would turn to after final exams and tax time.

Terence Grant
Los Angeles, CA

Our reviews are the opinions of four different video game experts (a.k.a. the Review Crew). Their scores show you, the reader, that you might like or hate the game too. Needless to say, some people will like (or hate) the games more (or less) than our reviewers. As for Mr. Acosta and his belief that EGM readers need to get a life, we received hundreds of letters from people who wanted to put him in his place (most of these letters had more colorful vocabulary than this one). Unfortunately, that was probably Mr. Acosta's intent. Many people with this "better than you" complex just love getting all sorts of undeserved attention that they missed out on in life. It was pretty clear that his arguments are ludicrous, so let's not give him another moment's thought, alright?



Congratulations! You win an Acclaim Dual Turbo Joystick.

CHALLENGING

Dear EGM,

I am a 22-year-old female who loves to play video games. I read EGM quite frequently, and it really ticks me off that you have nothing but MALE game reviewers!!! I play sports games and fighting games (and I have yet to meet a MAN that can beat me at any version of Street Fighter!). I do not look like something that crawled out from under a rock (why do girls have to be ugly geeks if they play video games?—Actually, I model in Chicago). What's the deal?

Nikkole Palmatier
NikkoleP@aol.com

Wait a minute, who ever said that Sushi-X is a male? (Sushi, we were joking! Put away those katanas!) Well, this sort of sounds like a challenge to the Review Crew. All we

have to say is, "Bring it on!" We are curious as to what you really look like. Your letter certainly put a lot of emphasis on how good you supposedly look.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE SUPER NES CD?

Dear EGM,

I wanted to ask you why the Super NES CD was never released? It sounded like a good idea at the time. I think it would have made a lot of CD-RDM maniacs elated if Nintendo had made a 32-Bit CD-RDM system.

Chris Mair
Wooster, OH

Ironically, Sony originally had a deal to make the Super NES CD-RDM drive add-on for Nintendo. Negotiations fell through, and the plans were dropped. Eventually, the technology that Sony worked on for Nintendo evolved into the PlayStation as we know it today.

DON'T BELIEVE THE HYPE

Dear EGM,

Yesterday, while surfing the Internet, I came across an article in a Dragon Ball Z Web site. It said, "Bandai of America is releasing Dragon Ball Z Legends for the Sega Saturn on American shores." Is this true?

J Cameron Crooks
San Diego, CA

Unfortunately for Dragon Ball Z fans, the answer is a tantalizing "maybe," as of this writing. Jeff Rotter, associate producer at Bandai of America, told us that he couldn't confirm that any DBZ games would be coming out here in the U.S. When we pushed a little further, he hinted that it's a definite possibility that a DBZ game may come to any of the American systems (PS, Saturn, N64), and negotiations are in the works. He also advised not believing what you read on the Internet about Dragon Ball Z, unless it comes directly from their home page (www.bandai.com). Mr. Rotter promised to alert us the minute information became available on an American DBZ title, if any. We'll let you know immediately when we get any breaking news.



Sorry, no Dragon Ball Z Legends for the American shores. That's not yet.

the games itself that really matters? Sony switched from the large cardboard game cases to the smaller CD jewel cases for several reasons: 1. They discovered that retailers needed more space for the mass amount of titles available. The jewel cases are slimmer, so that allows store owners to stock more product on the shelves. 2. Focus testing showed that most consumers preferred the smaller, more compact jewel casing to the original bulky PlayStation game boxes. 3. Many people already have means of storing CD jewel cases (from their existing music CD collections). Putting PS games in these jewel cases will make them easy for people to store. We understand that you may not like them because of the mismatching, but banning buying new games because of that? Well, it's your prerogative (as well as your loss).

INTERFACE

WHICH CREW'S THE REVIEW CREW?

Dear EGM,
I noticed that in older issues of EGM the Review Crew is different than it is now. Then my friend told me that it was even changed a long time ago too. Why have there been so many changes in the Review Crew? Do jobs like that open up a lot?

Joe Malmberg
Akron, OH

What can we say? The only constant is change. As in many magazines, there are adjustments. We are happy to say that we now have a solid Review Crew that probably won't move for a long time (so you won't find any positions for EGM reviewers opening up any time soon). One thing has been consistent though. Sushi-X has always stuck it out with the Review Crew. Of course, with Sushi being as crazy about gaming as he is, it's no wonder.

OK, JUST A FEW MORE...

Dear EGM,
In response to Taylor Acosta's letter (January 1997 issue), I would like to say that gaming is a big industry. It provides jobs for people. So if magazines like EGM were to stop printing because of people like you, thousands of people would be unemployed. Would YOU like to be the one responsible for the downfall of America's economy? I didn't think so.

Mr. Thanatos
cycleservice@oro.net

Dear EGM,
I was reading Interface, and I saw Taylor Acosta's letter. It really made me mad. I buy your game magazine every month, and I also play video games. I earn A's and B's. I also play pool. Nothing is wrong with me. He needs a good kick in the face.

Paul Meister
paulmeister3@juno.com

We know we said that we shouldn't give Mr. Acosta more attention than he deserves (in the Letter of the Month), but we just couldn't resist.

Dear EGM,
I'm writing in response to those people out there who think all video gamer players need to "get a life." I'm a 28-year-old hemophiliac who wore full leg braces for most of my childhood. I couldn't run, jump, play football or do anything else that was too physical. But, when I took a hold of a joystick, I was defending the entire world, fighting off swarms after swarms of those darn space invaders. As I grew older, my legs never got any better, but the games did. While my brother and his friends played baseball in the park, I'd plug in my Intellivision Baseball. While it's not the same experience, for me, it was a chance to play the game instead of just watching it. Now, I'm grown up. I've never ridden a bike or driven a JetSki, but I have played both Paperboy and Wave Race 64. So, in "your" world, call me a geek or a leech. Call my hobby a waste of time. Tell me to get a life. But grab a control pad and step

into "my" world, and with just two thumbs, I'll butt-stomp, fireball, Dragon Punch and flawless victory fatality your [butt] into a charred pile of goo! For in "your" world, I'm physically weak. But, in "our" world, for just those few moments, I'm god-like.

Rod
Hollywood, FL

If you would've ended your letter with "...I'm somebody" instead of "...I'm god-like," we would've cried and turned your letter into a TV movie of the week.



Can't let 500 Play Wave Race 64 pretend!

CLARIFICATIONS

In our last issue (February, 1997) we listed in the Review Crew that Donkey Kong Country 3 was for the PlayStation. As most of us know, that's a big boo-boo. DKC3 is an exclusive Super NES title. Sorry about any confusion!

EGM LETTER ART

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Taylor Benson
Ithaca, NY



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Bayside, NY



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Addicks, TX



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Advertiser Index

7, 57, 77	Acclaim
24-25	Activision
19	Alpa Electric
73-75	ASCII
51, 87	Arcus
20-21	BMG Interactive
115	BRE Software
120	Capcom
89	Chips & Bits
40-41, 78-79	Eidos
116	Game Express
61	Game Master
109	Game Spot
118-19	Interact Accessories
117	Japan Video Games
85	Koei
59	Konami
29-31	Lucas Arts
53	Midway
4-5, 45-47	Namco
54-55, 113	Nintendo
11, 16-17	Playmates
49	Psychosis
23	Sargento Cheese
12, 13	Sega
37	Sierra On-Line
2-3, 33	Sony Computer
43	Tecmo
8-9, 62-63	20th Century Fox
39, 85	Virgin Interactive

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Next Month

EGM²

Tips, Tricks and Strategies for Home and Arcade

March 1997

Although the holiday rush is over, there are still plenty of games to get your hands on. Whether it's *Soul on the Saturn*, *Mario Kart 64* on the *N64*, *Spider* on the *PS* or a 16-bit title, we'll be covering all the bases to bring you the latest in-depth look at how to get you into the games to win.



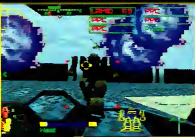
Be sure to check out the latest tips and tactics for *N64* games like *Mario Kart*.

It's getting to be that time of the year when fighting games rear their heads to do battle. This time the war is waged in the arcade and at home.

Although it may be a bit early, *Tekken 3* and *Street Fighter III* will be hot on the presses, and *EGM* will be there to tell you how it plays and what gamers will have to learn to become the new masters.

Also, on the home front, look for arcade ports like *War Gods*, *Psychic Force* and *Soul Blade* to heat up the competition. We'll give you all the moves and magic to get you on top.

Feature Story



Arkivise now brings *MechWarrior 2* to the PlayStation right from the computer. This version has several additions and alterations from the original. Check out all the differences and tips in this coming issue.



It's that time again, too. It's the annual fighting game issue and many new arcade games appear and others make their way home!

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

April 1997



FEATURE STORY

CHARACTER	HP	MP	SP	EXP	LEVEL	STATUS
Barret	493	572	47			
Aeris	346	489	17			
Cloud	431	536	53			

The long-awaited three-disc set of *Final Fantasy VII* is finally out in Japan. Does it live up to expectations, and what is in store for the U.S.?



Sushi-X has been playing *Street Fighter III* for some time now. Watch for part four of our coverage!

Final Fantasy VII has finally been released in Japan. Our editors have been playing it—watch for the first hands-on evaluation.

Also, *Sushi-X* has been busy with *Street Fighter III*. You saw the info first in *EGM*. Don't miss part four of our coverage on this coin-op.

To continue our fighting game coverage look for the first info on *Mace*, *Biofreaks* and more *Tekken 3!*

As for previews, our editors have been working hard on getting the first pictures of *Ninja*, *Host*, *Clay Fighter 3* and more. If the game is being



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Our Review Crew is already tearing into *MechWarrior 2*. As you know, our crew is brutally honest, and you won't see all high scores from them as you see in other mags.

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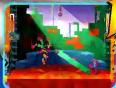
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